

KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

Ministry of Justice and Ministry of
Foreign Affairs.

WAR OF 1914-1916.

REPLY

To the German White Book of the
10th May, 1915,

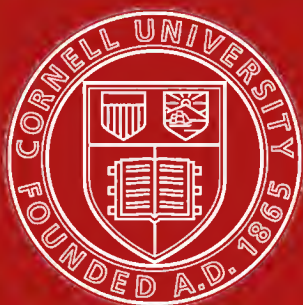
“Die völkerrechtswidrige Führung
des belgischen Volkskriegs.”

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INTRODUCTION.

On June 14th, 1915, a German "White Book" dealing with the so-called Belgian civilian war, and entitled *Die völkerrechtswidrige Führung des belgischen Volkskriegs*,* came into the possession of the Belgian Government. The Note (*Denkschrift*), dated May 10th, 1915, prefixed to this work, is unsigned, but it emanates from the Imperial Foreign Office (*Auswärtiges Amt*), under the auspices of which the "White Book" is published. With the exception of this introductory note, the "White Book" is the work of the Military Bureau of Inquiry into Violations of the Laws of War,† which has been set up at the Ministry of War in Berlin. It contains four general reports (*zusammenfassender Bericht*) or summaries, signed on behalf of the Military Bureau by *Kammergerichtsrat* (Councillor of the Supreme Court), Dr. Wagner, and Major Bauer, and dealing with the events that took place in the towns of Aerschot, Andenne, Dinant and Louvain; further, various appendices (*Anlagen*), consisting of extracts from war-diaries (*Kriegstagebuch*) or military reports (*Gefechtsbericht, Meldung*), and the depositions of officers, doctors and soldiers; these appendices relate to acts committed in the four towns mentioned above, and also in a certain number of other places.

The Belgian Government protests indignantly against this arraignment, which reiterates and generalises accusations disseminated at the beginning of the war by the German press, accusations, many of which have been disproved by that press itself, as well as by official German enquiries, undertaken notably on the initiative of the ecclesiastical association, *Pax*. This applies more especially to the accusation brought against the Belgian population of having put out the eyes of the German wounded.

The aim of the Imperial Government in their official publication is to counteract the general reprobation aroused in the world by the deeds of violence committed by the German invaders of Belgium, and to alienate the universal sympathy evoked by Belgium's attitude and her sufferings. This defence is designed more especially to impress countries which stand aloof from the conflict, and have not as yet formed any definite opinion as to the belligerent methods of Germany. The diffusion in Belgium itself of the calumnies and insults heaped upon its population by the "White Book" seems to have resulted in a revolt of public opinion by no means favourable to the usurpers. Hence, according to information received from several sources by the Belgian Government, the newspapers published in Belgium under German censorship have refrained from comment on, and even from allusion to, the "White Book," though a few copies of this have been on sale in Belgium, together with copies of a French translation of the work, containing only the Prefatory Note drawn up by the Imperial Foreign Office, and the four reports of the Military Bureau of Inquiry; with the exception of two maps, none of the 212 appendices of the German edition appear in the translation.‡

* Approximate translation: "The civilian warfare waged in Belgium in defiance of international law."

† *Militär-Untersuchungsstelle für Verletzungen des Kriegsrechts.*

‡ The translations of passages of the "White Book," reproduced in the present volume, are very close renderings of the original text. They occasionally differ slightly, at least in form, from the German official translation into French. The official translation bears the following title: *La Conduite contraire au Droit des Gens de la population belge dans sa lutte contre les troupes allemandes* (The infringements of International Law committed by the Belgian population in its warfare against the German troops).

The policy of the German Government is to refrain from advertising the accusations brought against the civil population in Belgium itself. The newspapers which appear in Brussels and in the provinces avoid discussion of this question; taking into account their Belgian readers, their writers could hardly accuse the population of having mutilated the wounded. As to the pamphlets scattered broadcast throughout Germany, the essence, as also apparently the chief attractions of which are flamboyant tales of the misdeeds ascribed to the Belgian population,* very often they can only be obtained in Belgium if specially ordered; a certain number of them have, it is true, appeared in the bookshop windows, but they remain unknown to the mass of the population, who do not understand German.†

Towards the beginning of 1915 the German press and German literature, as if in obedience to instructions, began to lay stress upon the qualities of industry, honesty and intelligence characteristic of the Belgian population, not only in the Flemish, but also in the Walloon provinces. It was, we may suppose, a desire not to obstruct this campaign or wantonly wound public feeling in Belgium that inspired the German Government to suppress the passage concerning the cruelties and acts of hostility imputed to the population in the German note replying to Sir Edward Grey's speech of March 22nd, when it caused this note to be reproduced in its semi-official organ at Brussels, *La Belgique*, on March 28th, 1915.‡ The discrepancy between the accusation and the facts would have been too flagrant to stand the test of public opinion acquainted with the truth. Yet at the very time when the German Government was showing this interested tenderness for popular feeling in Belgium, the voluminous *dossier* reproduced in the "White Book" was being prepared for the consumption of foreign countries, where little was known of the conditions under which the passage of the Imperial troops through Belgium was effected.

* * *

This book is the arbitrary report§ of a one-sided inquiry, in which the authors of the alleged misdeeds assume the functions of judges. A counter-inquiry on the

* The following are the titles of some of these pamphlets:—

Die belgischen Greuelthaten gegen die Deutschen, der Franktireurkrieg und die Verwendung von Dum-Dum Geschossen im Kriege 1914. Amtliche und glaubwürdige Berichte (60 Pfg. Verlag von Otto Gustav Zehrfeld in Leipzig, 48 pp.)

Das Schwarzbuch der Schandthaten unserer Feinde (1915, Wilhelm Borngraber Verlag, Berlin, W., 198 pp.)

U. v. JUCHEN.—*Der Weltkrieg 1914. Belgische Kriegsgreuel. Verirrungen menschlicher Scheusale* (Dresden A. 16, Max Fischer's Verlagsbuchhandlung, 20 Pfg., 64 pp.)

ROBERT HEYMANN.—*Der Weltkrieg 1914. Sturmnacht in Löwen* (Dresden A. 16, Max Fischer's Verlagsbuchhandlung, 20 Pfg., 64 pp.)

Der deutsche Krieg in Feldpostbriefen, Lüttich, Namur, Antwerpen (München, Georg Müller, 1915, 265 pp.)

Krieg und Sieg 1914, nach Berichten der Zeitgenossen, Lüttich (Hermann Hillger Verlag, Berlin W. 9, und Leipzig, 20 Pfg., 48 pp.)

MAJOR VIKTOR v. STRANTZ.—*Die Eroberung Belgiens 1914. Selbsterlebtes* (Wilhelm Köhler, Minden in Westfalen, 1, 20 M., 160 pp.)

† Within the last few months, however, a French edition of the book by Abbé Rosenberg, Professor of Religion at Paderborn, has been circulated in Belgium. This book, entitled *La Guerre allemande et le Catholicisme, Réponse allemande aux attaques françaises* (C. L. van Langenhuyzen, Amsterdam-Rotterdam, 1915), contains complete or partial translations of fifteen of the appendices to the "White Book," and also of four other depositions which do not figure in this book. See on the assertions concerning Belgium contained in the Abbé Rosenberg's work, pp. 362–367 of the present volume.

‡ The following is the tenour of the suppressed passage: "Belgium owes her fate to the English Government, which subsequently failed to give her effectual military support, and further, to the attitude of her population, which opposed the German troops by force of arms, and was guilty of fearful acts of atrocity to the German wounded. England and not Germany must be held responsible some day by those who have suffered." (*Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of March 26th, second edition, containing the text of the German Note in reply to Sir Edward Grey's speech on the reasons which decided England to take part in the war.)

§ The prefatory Note of the "White Book" remarks (p. 1) that the documents published are a selection, and that others may be produced in time. It is obvious, however, that preference will have been given to the documents which were considered most convincing, and that no subsequent publications will be able to modify the impression produced by the almost total lack of Belgian or neutral evidence in the "White Book."

spot was impossible, as the German authorities have consistently refused the requests made to them on several occasions, to give facilities for a bilateral or international inquiry.

Deprived of all means of official communication with the part of the population still in Belgium, the King's Government has found it impossible to verify the assertions of the "White Book" on a certain number of points. On the other hand, it has been obliged to refrain from publication of several depositions of the highest importance, lest it should expose witnesses to the reprisals of the enemy; among other statements which it has been possible to publish, there are some whose authors' names it has been necessary to suppress for the same reason.

It is essential to bear these facts perpetually in mind, in order to appraise the value of the German accusations, and also to understand the character of the present publication.

When the liberation of Belgian territory has been accomplished it will be possible to publish a number of documents which will throw further light upon the application to Belgium of the *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*, that Code of War on land published in 1902 by the Historical Section of the great General Staff of the German Army,* which not only puts the officer on his guard against the humanitarian conceptions of the Hague Conventions, but itself diverges on essential points from the stipulations of these international agreements.

The "White Book" accuses :

The Belgian civil population of having fought against the German troops under conditions contrary to the rules of international law, and of perpetrating cruelties upon the German wounded ;

The Belgian Government, not only of having failed to prevent "civilian warfare," but of having aided and abetted in its organisation ;

The Belgian Commission of Inquiry into the violation of international law, and of the laws and usages of war, of having disseminated calumnies concerning the German army.

These three classes of accusations will first be dealt with in a general manner. In the second part, the chapters devoted in the "White Book" to events at Aerschot, Andenne, Dinant, and Louvain, as also to occurrences in certain other localities in the country, will be subjected to special scrutiny. Reproductions of the depositions made before the Belgian and English Commissions of Inquiry, and of the statements of German military prisoners, will facilitate the task of those who seek to know the truth.

* * *

The compilation of the present volume was completed, when the Belgian Government first saw the text of the protest addressed on November 6th, 1915, by Monseigneur Heylen and Monseigneur Rutten to the Governor-General of occupied Belgium, Baron von Bissing, against the allegations in the "White Book." This double protest was based on an inquiry held on the spot ; the inquiry of the Bishops of

* Title : *Kriegsgeschichtliche Einzelschriften, Herausgegeben vom Grossen Generalstabe, Kriegsgeschichtliche Abteilung I, Heft 31, Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*, Berlin, 1902, Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn. English translation by J. H. Morgan, M.A., under the title *The German War Book*, London, John Murray, 1915.

Namur and Liège, undertaken without the knowledge of the Belgian Government, establishes in the most striking and irrefutable manner the irreproachable conduct of the civilian population, at any rate in these two dioceses.*

At about the same time the Belgian Government received the text of a collective letter, dated November 24th, 1915, in which the Belgian Episcopate proposed to the Austro-German Episcopate the constitution of a joint commission, presided over by a neutral as supreme arbiter, to inquire into recent events. Referring to the supposed acts of cruelty to the German wounded imputed to the Belgian population, the letter makes this emphatic declaration: "We know that these impudent accusations made by the Imperial Government are calumnies from beginning to end. We know it and we swear it."

The texts of these protests and of this letter, together with various other documents, have been inserted in the third part of this volume.

* The diocese of Liège comprises the provinces of Liège and Limburg, and that of Namur, Namur and Luxemburg.

CHAPTER I.

ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT.

The Prefatory Note of the "White Book" declares that the German army encountered the armed resistance of the civilian population immediately upon its entry into Belgium; not only isolated individuals, but large masses of the people are said to have thrown themselves into the fray, which the "White Book" accordingly designates "the people's war."

Making a distinction between "organised people's war" (*Volkskrieg*) and "unorganised people's war," the Prefatory Note argues that the Belgian *francs-tireurs*,* seeing that they were not under the command of responsible leaders and wore no distinctive badges recognisable from a distance, could not invoke the authority of Article I. of the Hague Regulations touching the laws and usages of war,† which treats of an organised people's war; and lays down the conditions to be observed by militia and volunteer corps if the rights, laws and usages of war are to be applicable to them.‡ As it had not been organised as prescribed in Article I., the Belgian people's war was, according to the "White Book," merely a non-organised resistance on the part of the civil population. This resistance was illegal. The unorganised population could not, in fact, claim the application of Article II. of the Regulations concerning an unorganised people's war,§ on the one hand, because it did not bear arms openly and did not observe the laws and usages of war, and, on the other hand, because unorganised people's war is only permissible in territory not yet occupied by the enemy, and in cases where there has been no time to organise as prescribed in Article I. The unorganised armed resistance of the Belgian population was contrary to international law, argues the Prefatory Note, not only in all the places already in the hands of the German troops (notably at Aerschot, Andenne and Louvain), where it was unlawful on every ground, but also in the districts not yet occupied by them (as, above all, at Dinant and in its neighbourhood), "seeing that the Belgian Government had had sufficient time to organise people's warfare in accordance with international law."

Making all due reserves as to the theory here set forth, it is important to remember that the Prefatory Note to the "White Book," officially interpreting the opinion of the German Government, recognises the following fact: in conformity with Article II. of the Regulations appended to the Fourth Hague Convention, the population should, in certain cases, be considered belligerent when it bears arms openly and observes the laws and usages of war, even should it lack responsible leaders and distinctive badges recognisable at a distance.

The Manual published in 1902 by the Historical Section of the Great General Staff of the German army, *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*,|| proclaims, on the contrary, the necessity of insisting on the wearing of distinctive badges under any conditions, even in the case of the *levée en masse*. The passage of the Manual which deals with this question is as follows:—

* As a fact, the so-called Belgian *francs-tireurs* were non-existent; avoiding any alterations in the text of the German thesis, we have refrained from introducing the word "so-called" above, just as in the first pages of this chapter we have, for convenience sake, taken for granted the theory—utterly opposed to the facts—of an armed resistance on the part of the Belgian civil population to the German troops.

† These Regulations form an Appendix to the Fourth Hague Convention of 1907 (Convention touching the laws and usages of war on land). Article I. of these Regulations runs as follows: "The rights, laws and duties of war are applicable not only to the Army, but to Militia and Volunteer Corps, which fulfil the following conditions: 1. Subjection to a responsible leader; 2. The adoption of a distinctive badge recognisable at a distance; 3. The bearing of weapons openly; 4. The observance of the laws and usages of war in military operations. In countries where Militia or Volunteer Corps compose the army or form part of it, they are included in the term 'Army.'"

‡ The Prefatory Note adds that the fact of Belgian soldiers and members of the Civic Guard having, apparently, taken part in the enterprises of the *francs-tireurs* has no bearing on the case, "for these persons also wore no military badges, and mingled in civilian dress with the combatant population."

§ These are the terms of the Article: "The population of an unoccupied territory which, on the approach of the enemy spontaneously takes up arms to resist the invading troops, having had no time to organise as prescribed in Article I., shall be considered belligerent if it bears arms openly, and observes the laws and usages of war."

|| See note *, p. 5.

"*People's War or National War.*—These conditions* must also be maintained if it becomes a question of the *levée en masse*, the arming of the whole population of the country, province, or district; in other words, the so-called people's war or national war. Starting from the principle that one can never deny to the population of a country the natural right of defence of one's fatherland, and that the smaller and consequently less powerful States can only find protection in such *levées en masse*, the majority of authorities on International Law have, in their proposals for codification, sought to attain the recognition on principle of the combatant status of all these kinds of people's champions, and such recognition is also enjoined in the Declaration of Brussels and the Hague Regulations. As against this, one may nevertheless remark that the condition requiring a military organisation and a clearly recognisable mark of being attached to the enemy's troops is not synonymous with a denial of the natural right to defend one's country. It is therefore not a question of restraining the population from seizing arms, but only of compelling it to do this in an organised manner. 'Subjection to a responsible leader, a military organisation, and recognisable signs of belligerency cannot be left out of account unless the whole recognised foundation for the admission of irregulars be given up altogether, and a conflict of one individual against another be introduced again with all its attendant horrors, of which, for example, the proceedings in Bazeilles in the last Franco-German War afford an instance. If it has really been impossible to establish the necessary organisation—a case which is by no means likely to occur often—then individuals must refrain from hostilities, and those who commit them must be refused the rights of an active military status. The disadvantages and severities inherent in such a rule are more insignificant and less cruel than those which would result from greater indulgence.' "† (p. 7, Engl. ed. p. 62–63).

Since 1902 no revised edition of the work of the German General Staff and no new military Manual has been published in Germany; the *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege* accordingly continues to express the official doctrine of the German High Command, and to inform the spirit of German officers. Indeed, the work appeared in a collection of studies specially recommended to their consideration by the Great General Staff.

However this may be, the logical result of the theory advanced in the "White Book" is that civilians suspected of having committed acts of hostility against enemy troops should have been differently treated in regions already occupied by the German army and in regions not as yet occupied. As a matter of fact, this was not the case. None of the depositions recorded in the "White Book," none of the evidence given before the English and Belgian Commissioners suggest any difference of treatment. Everywhere civilians suspected of having committed hostile acts were treated, not as belligerents, but as criminals; in occupied as in unoccupied territory, the German officers applied the same system, utterly regardless of the distinction established by international law, and expressly accepted by the "White Book." Everywhere and always they acted in conformity with the doctrines of the *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*, and there is every reason to suppose that no idea of dissenting therefrom ever entered their heads for a moment.

The adhesion of the "White Book" to the principle laid down in the Hague Regulations, but criticised, and implicitly, if not categorically, repudiated by the Manual of the Great General Staff of the German army,‡ was not therefore translated into action. There can be no reasonable doubt that it was an after-thought, designed to enable the German military authorities to display an apparent reverence for the Hague Regulations, their violations of which have been a perpetual cause of complaint since the beginning of the war.

Besides, as we have shown above, the "White Book," immediately after having made a concession to universal feeling by recognising the distinction in question, hastens to retract, declaring that even in districts not so far occupied by the German troops—more especially at Dinant and in its environs—an unorganised people's

* *i.e.*, the adoption of a distinctive badge fixed and recognisable at a distance; the open bearing of weapons; the observance of the laws and usages of war.

† The passage beginning with the words: "Subjection to a responsible leader" down to the end of the extract from the German Manual is a quotation from the work of Professor Dr. C. Luder, *Das Landkriegsrecht*, Hamburg, 1888.

‡ The criticisms of the German Manual are, it is true, only strictly applicable to Article II. of the Hague Regulations as formulated by the first Peace Conference of 1899; but it is well known that the second Conference in 1907 merely added the words "if they bear arms openly" to the text adopted in 1899.

war was not lawful, seeing that the Belgian Government had had time enough to organise this war in accordance with international law.

This interpretation of Article II. of the Hague Regulations is entirely erroneous. These are the terms of the Article: "The population of an unoccupied territory which, on the approach of the enemy, spontaneously takes up arms to resist the invading troops, having had no time to organise as prescribed in Article I., shall be considered belligerent if it bears arms openly and observes the laws and usages of war."

The object of this Article was to protect populations arming themselves *spontaneously*—i.e., on their own initiative—on the approach of the enemy, having had no time to organise. It excludes the idea of Government intervention; the fact that a Government has not "organised" popular resistance cannot deprive a population of a right expressly recognised by international Convention.

Hence the introduction of the Belgian Government by the "White Book" is utterly irrelevant. The object of this manœuvre was to make the Belgian Government responsible for the bloodshed at Dinant and in so many other districts: as, owing to that Government, popular resistance was not in conformity with international law, were not the German soldiers justified in treating the inhabitants, not as belligerents but as criminals? The "White Book," as we know (p. 3), applies this argument to all districts not as yet occupied by the German army, although it only instances the town and environs of Dinant, which were not approached by any large bodies of German troops until about August 15th, 1914. The armed resistance of the inhabitants of districts adjoining the Belgo-Prussian frontier before these districts were occupied by the enemy, would also—had it taken place—have been contrary to international law, on the hypothesis that the Belgian Government, though it had the time, had not organised such resistance in accordance with the prescriptions of Article I. of these Regulations. It is hardly necessary to note the absurdity of such a proposition. Not only is it impossible to base any charge against the Belgian Government on this ground, but it is still more impossible to argue that two or three days' interval would have enabled the people to organise themselves as required by Article I. To maintain a contrary opinion is to deny any possible application of Article II., practically to consider it non-existent, and to admit that it is negligible.

Thus the tardy homage rendered by the Prefatory Note of the "White Book" to the principle enshrined in this Article is strictly confined to the domain of theory.

* * *

The attempt of the German Government to make the Belgian Government responsible for the alleged contravention of international law by the civil population is not even tenable in respect of the events which took place in regions not as yet occupied by the German troops. The accusation is general and does not except any part of the country. "For," says the Prefatory Note of the "White Book," "apart from the fact that a Government is in all cases responsible for such acts, which are a general expression of the popular will, the Belgian Government is at least open to the grave charge of having made no effort to discourage this *francs-tireurs* war, though it had the means of so doing."* (p. 5). In the body of the "White Book" the charge of instigation and complicity is clearly formulated, notably on pages 122 and 236. The attempt to incriminate the Belgian Government is evidenced even by the heading of the reports of the Berlin Military Bureau of Inquiry concerning the *Belgian* civilian "battle" of Dinant and the *Belgian* popular outbreaks at Aerschot, Andenne, and Louvain. The insertion of the word "Belgian" in the title of each report was obviously designed to prepare the ground for the imputation against the Government of having itself organised, or at least condoned, the armed resistance of the population. This accusation does not stand the test of an inquiry into the facts. By giving a national and general character to the alleged armed resistance of the Belgian population, it strives to demonstrate the necessity of the horrible bloodshed, for which we cannot doubt, history will never cease to arraign the Imperial armies.

* To support this charge the Prefatory Note cites *Anlagen* (appendices) 33, 51, 52, 53 and D. 42, 43 and 48. We shall deal with the majority of these *Anlagen* later on.

For the German "White Book" to accuse the Belgian Government of not having organised the people's war in accordance with legal prescriptions is not in itself sufficient to establish the essential fact on which all discussion as to the responsibility of this Government must be based, namely, the actual perpetration of acts of hostility against the German troops by the Belgian population. In the foregoing pages we have, for convenience' sake, taken this fact for granted. In the sequel we shall show how insufficient are the proofs adduced by the Imperial Government, and how little the actual facts, as revealed by the inquiries of the English and Belgian Commissions, agree with the thesis put forward in the "White Book."

* * *

It is certainly very doubtful whether the Belgian Government, unless it had prepared for such an eventuality before the war, would have had time, in the midst of the more urgent responsibilities laid upon it by the German aggression, to organise a people's war in conformity with Article I. of the Regulations concerning the laws and usages of war on land. Several weeks would no doubt have been required to establish such an organisation under the conditions which had arisen in the country.*

But did the Belgian Government entertain the idea of such an enterprise for a moment? Did they even approve or condone a spontaneous outbreak of *francs-tireurs* hostilities?

The Prefatory Note of the "White Book" maintains that "the Belgian Government, utterly ignoring their duties, gave free rein to the insensate passions of the population" (p. 6), and expresses the opinion that "it would certainly have been easy for them to have given their agents, such as burgomasters, soldiers, and members of the Civic Guard, the necessary instructions, which would have had the effect of curbing the passionate and artificially provoked excitement of the population" (p. 5).

In their desire to instruct the inhabitants as to their duties, and in their efforts to dissuade them from committing acts of hostility against the German troops, the Belgian Government went very far beyond what the "White Book" lays down as necessary to such ends.

As early as August 4th, 1914, the Minister of the Interior, M. Berryer, addressed a circular to the administrators of the communes throughout the country, recalling, in such a manner that none should remain in ignorance on the subject, the principles laid down by the Hague Convention concerning the laws and customs of war on land, and confirmed by the Regulations appended thereto. The text of this circular is reproduced *in extenso* on p. 289 *et seq.* of the present volume.

Further, from the very beginning of hostilities the Minister of the Interior, appealing directly to the population, caused the following notice to be inserted every day in the newspapers of all parties throughout the country, in large type and in a conspicuous position.

TO CIVILIANS.

"The Minister of the Interior recommends civilians, in case the enemy should show himself in their district:—

"Not to fight.

"To give expression to no insulting or threatening words.

"To remain within their houses and close the windows, so that it will be impossible to allege that there was any provocation.

"To evacuate any houses or isolated hamlet which the soldiers may occupy in order to defend themselves, so that it cannot be alleged that civilians have fired.

"An act of violence committed by a single civilian would be actually a crime, for which the law provides arrest and punishment. It is all the more reprehensible in that it might serve as a pretext for measures of repression resulting in bloodshed or pillage, and the massacre of the innocent population with the women and children."

* We may form some idea of the complexity of such an enterprise if we consider the difficulties encountered by the Belgian Government in providing weapons and distinctive badges for the Reservists of the Civic Guard, called up on August 5th, 1914 (see p. 13). And yet, on the one hand, the numbers in this case were comparatively small, forming a total of about 100,000 men, the strength of the units being restricted in principle to 20 men for every 1,000 inhabitants; and, on the other hand, the Government was not under the necessity of appointing leaders for the units, since each of these is permanently provided with a regular *cadre*.

Shortly before the fall of Antwerp, on September 30th, 1914, the Minister of the Interior again addressed a circular containing the same injunctions in French, Flemish and German, to all the communes of districts not as yet occupied. Moreover, in their efforts to dissuade the population from acts inspired by the violent irritation aroused by the invader, the violator of plighted faith and national territory, the Government was most efficiently seconded by the communal administrators of the whole country. Bringing their authority and their influence to bear upon the minds of the public, they enjoined the populations, generally by proclamation or some such method, to abstain from all acts of hostility, or, better still, they advised or ordered the owners of weapons to deposit them in the town halls or police stations.

The German authorities are well aware of all these facts. The notices posted up at the instance of the communal administrators must have met the eyes of the German officers on every side. But evidence itself has no effect upon the pre-conceived opinions of members of the Berlin Military Bureau of Inquiry. At Louvain they declare "the direction of the treacherous revolt must have been in the hands of a superior administration." They do not hesitate to write that "the Belgian Government has never dared to allude to the participation of bodies of regular troops in this action" (p. 236). At Aerschot, "the burgomaster's family took part in the hostilities;" this participation, they add, proved how methodically the Belgian authorities associated themselves with the treacherous enterprises which were alas! so frequent! (p. 92). At Andenne, writes Baron von Langermann, whose evidence is reproduced in the "White Book" without comment or reservation, "as we were subsequently informed (*sic*), a document was found in the Burgomaster's house which showed that the attack made by the population had been arranged beforehand even in the minutest details" (p. 109). As to the civilian battle at Dinant, it must have been organised *with the help of the Belgian Government itself* (p. 122). This conclusion is drawn more especially from the fact that some machine-guns are said to have been found at Dinant. Did it never occur to the inquirers at Berlin that even if this were the case the guns might have been installed by the French troops, who occupied the town for several days, and put it into a state of defence?

The German authorities who entered the city of Liège must certainly have read the notices posted on the walls as early as August 5th by the Burgomaster, reproducing word for word the circular issued by the Minister of the Interior on August 4th. This circular contained the following passage:—

"Acts forbidden to soldiers are of course still more inadmissible to civilians—such as the use of poison or poisoned weapons, the killing or wounding by treachery of persons, military or civil, belonging to the hostile nation, the killing or wounding of enemies who have laid down their arms, who can no longer defend themselves, and have surrendered at discretion."

A notice by M. Max, Burgomaster of Brussels, ran as follows:—

FIREARMS.

"As the laws of war forbid the civil population to take part in hostilities, and as all infringements of this rule may bring about reprisals, many of my fellow citizens have expressed a wish to get rid of the firearms in their possession.

"These weapons may be deposited at the police stations, where receipts will be given for them.

"They will be placed under safe keeping in the central arsenal of Antwerp, and restored to their owners after the conclusion of hostilities.

"Brussels, August 12, 1914."

Moreover, one of the first measures taken by the German commanders was to repeat this injunction, accompanying it with threats of death.

Nevertheless, this extremely prudent measure has been officially exploited against the Belgian Government.

True, the "White Book" refrains from reproducing in the Prefatory Note drawn up in the Imperial Foreign Office, and in the four reports of the Military Bureau of Inquiry, the accusation launched against the Belgian Government in August, 1914, in the form of official *communiqués*, and charging it with having organised depôts of arms, where each gun bore the name of the citizen for whom it was destined. This piece of perfidy really passed all bounds, but it seems that its authors have not even yet entirely abandoned it. "In the town hall of Acoz," says the "White Book" (Appendix 44), "several cases of dynamite were found, also

some hundreds of guns and packets of cartridges; each packet bore the name of the citizen for whom the cartridges were destined." This statement was made by non-commissioned officers and soldiers, and is inserted in the report of the cavalry captain, Lüdke. The compilers of the "White Book" do not think it their duty to point out, by note or comment, that the soldiers and their officer were perhaps honestly, but very obviously, mistaken. Would it be unjust to conclude that they accept responsibility for this calumny?

* * *

By a royal decree of August 5th, 1914, the Reservists of the Civic Guard in all the communes of the kingdom were called up. Unlike the Councillor of the War Tribunal, Dr. Grasshoff, author of the work *Belgiens Schuld (Belgium's Guilt)*,* himself apparently a member (App. D 38 and 46) of the Military Bureau of Inquiry at Berlin† (of which the "White Book" is the work, save for the six introductory pages drawn up in the Foreign Office), the German Government (not daring to protest against an incontestably legal act) does not make this measure a grievance against the Belgian Government.‡

But the "White Book," which, moreover, never makes any distinction between the active Civic Guard and the Reserve of that body, frequently denounces the intervention of what it loosely designates "the Civic Guard" in the organisation of the resistance of the civil population, and in the actual fighting. It is on this action of the Civic Guard that the German Government would seem mainly to base the accusation it brings against the Belgian Government, of having incited the population (or allowed it to be incited), against the German troops. Thus even in the Prefatory Note of the "White Book," drawn up in the Imperial Foreign Office, we read that "members of the Civic Guard, without uniform or badges, apparently took part in the operations of the *francs-tireurs*" (p. 3). An inhabitant of Chiny is said to have declared that on August 9th, the "Civil Guards" (*sic*) had come to the place, and had given the inhabitants detailed instructions as to the use of fire-arms and the manner in which to defend the village" (App. 52). In the report which opens the chapter relating to the burning of Louvain, the German Military Bureau of Inquiry suggests that the direction of the revolt must have been in the hands of a superior authority (*eine höhere Stelle*): that everything indicates the existence of an official (*behördliche*) organisation and incriminates "the commander—whose official residence is at Louvain—of the so-called Civic Guard," as the person who directed the organisation of the "rising," in which only men in civilian dress are said to have taken part (among others a number of young men without badges, strangers in the town, and soldiers disguised as civilians). It adds that "the misdeeds of the Civic Guard are revealed to the whole civilised world by the typical case of Louvain" (p. 236). General von Boehn, who commanded the German troops in Louvain on August 25th and the following days, declares for his part that "the nucleus of all these bands of *francs-tireurs* was furnished by the Civic Guard, obviously under the direction of the Commandant at Louvain, whose luggage was seized at the Hôtel Métropole" (App. D 1).§

* Georg Reimer, Publisher, Berlin. A French translation of this work has also been published under the title: *La Belgique coupable. Une Réponse à M. le Professeur Waxweiler*. Berlin, Georg Reimer, and Berne, Max Drechsel, 1915.

† The evidence of witnesses who appeared before the Military Bureau at Berlin, instituted by the Imperial War Office, was taken by Dr. Grasshoff, an official of the said War Office, acting on behalf of the Bureau, and assisted only by a clerk.

‡ It is well to call attention to the attitude adopted by Dr. Grasshoff (see p. 44 of the German edition and p. 42 of the French edition of his book), as compared with the reticence of the compilers of the "White Book" in this connection.

§ What are the grounds on which the members of the Military Bureau and General von Boehn base their conviction that the Civic Guard played the principal part in the organisation of the "revolt" of Louvain? According to the report of the Military Bureau, the Commander of "the so-called Civic Guard" was at Louvain immediately before the outbreak; the movement was afterwards begun by sending to Louvain a number of undisciplined young men, without distinctive badges. These, together with soldiers disguised as civilians, concealed themselves in the houses in order to fire unseen at a favourable moment on the German troops, who were apparently retiring (p. 236). The widow of a doctor, whose name is not revealed, is said to have given it as her opinion that those who fired were members of the

In view of the confusion of ideas which obtains among the German authorities as to the Belgian Civic Guard, it seems necessary to give some information concerning the organisation of this institution. We shall thus be enabled at the same time to dispose of the criticisms levelled at the calling up of the Civic Guard Reserves in the German press and German literature.

* * *

The Civic Guard, established by the Constitution of 1830, and charged by various subsequent laws with the double mission of the maintenance of law and order, and the preservation of national independence and territorial integrity, is on active service, unless specially exempted by the Government, in places containing over 10,000 inhabitants, as well as in all those which are fortified, or dominated by a fortress; in other localities, it is in reserve, and only becomes active when called up by the King.

It would have been inconceivable that the Government, with this element of national strength at its disposal, should have failed to make use of it at a time when the country was about to enter upon the most momentous crisis of its existence.

The Civic Guard on active service was accordingly convoked, and the Reserves of the force were called up. These measures were essential, if only to maintain order and security, and among other objects, to ensure the protection of the person and property of German nationals, in all eventualities. In countries in a state of war, where no such institution exists, it is usual for citizens to form themselves spontaneously into bodies to carry out these police duties. It may be pointed out that the calling up of the Reserves of the Civic Guard had neither the character nor the proportions of a *levée en masse* of the population. The effectives of these Guards represent, in principle, only 2 per cent. at most of the population, and amount

Civic Guard (App. D 30). A bank employé, also anonymous, is said to have been of the same opinion, and added that on August 25th, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, Civic Guards forced their way into the houses, threatening those who opposed them with death; that the citizens of Louvain objected to treacherous firing on the German troops, but that the leaders of the Civic Guard compelled them to tolerate it (App. D 45). Lieutenant Brandt seized a document of the Belgian Government in the house of the Burgomaster of Winghe-Saint-Georges ordering the "mobilisation" of the Civic Guard, and also lists of the members of this Guard. He could not, however, proceed to arrest any of these members, not because nearly all the villagers had fled, as the Burgomaster asserted, but because, as he supposed, the male inhabitants had been summoned to Louvain, where there was to be a concentration of these "troops" (App. D 48). Finally, General von Boehn maintains that, according to statements made by inhabitants of Louvain, a certain number of young men, never before seen in the town, appeared in Louvain dressed as workmen, though they were obviously not members of the working classes; these young men, the General concludes, joined the Civic Guard. Another argument designed to incriminate the Civic Guard, and no less speculative in character, is advanced in the remark that a corps habitually dressed in civilian costume would readily retain or revert to this costume whenever this seemed convenient. General von Boehn himself makes this remark, following it immediately by the words: "Louvain was clearly the centre of this organisation, which was better carried out here than elsewhere because the Commandant was on the spot" (App. D 1, p. 242, para. 9).

In vain do we ask ourselves what can have induced the German authorities to believe that the Commander-in-Chief of "the so-called Civic Guard" was stationed at Louvain. There is no "Commander-in-Chief" of the Civic Guard in Belgium; there are, however, four superior chiefs of the Civic Guard in the country. The chief of the Civic Guard of the provinces of Brabant and Antwerp. Lieutenant-General de Coune, has an official residence at Brussels; he has never been at Louvain at all since the beginning of the war. The Civic Guard of Louvain was disbanded and disarmed on August 19th, at 7 a.m. Its arms and equipment were sent to Antwerp the same day. How is it possible to suppose that, under these circumstances, a "rising" could have been organised in Louvain by a "superior authority," entirely unnoticed by the German military commanders, who had been installed there since the 19th? Further, it is very remarkable that the name of this Commander, who is said to have played so important a part, is not given. The assertions of the doctor's widow and the bank employé, who were not called upon to give evidence before the German Board of Inquiry and whose names are not revealed, may be looked upon as completely negligible. The document found at Winghe-Saint-Georges related to the calling up of the Civic Guard Reservists; Lieutenant Brandt displays his ignorance and shews that he was governed by a preconceived idea when he puts forward the hypothesis that the male inhabitants of the village had been summoned to Louvain. The organisation of the reserves of the Civic Guard is essentially communal; the units formed in each commune are not grouped into territorial units. No inhabitant of Louvain came forward to give personal evidence as to strangers in the town who joined the Civic Guard; or, at any rate, there is no deposition to this effect in the "White Book." We cannot doubt that the compilers of this publication would not have failed to produce such testimony had they been able to do so. General von Boehn formed an opinion on this point on the evidence of irresponsible gossip. One of these stories is repeated in Captain Josephson's deposition (App. D 34). (See also p. 70 *et seq.* of the present volume.)

to a total of about 100,000 men for the whole of Belgium.* Recruiting for the Reserve is ensured by a register of qualified men kept by the communal authorities and revised annually. The organisation is purely communal. The communal units, varying from 20 to 150 men (officers excluded), do not form district units. They are permanently provided with regular *cadres*. As by its very constitution, the function of the Civic Guard is not only to maintain public order, but also to keep watch and ward over national independence and territorial integrity, and as by virtue of these functions it constitutes a militia, the Government, regardless of considerations as to whether the military authorities would make use in actual warfare of the Civic Guards—and especially of those recently called up—was in duty bound to see that the members of the Guard complied with the prescriptions of the Regulations appended to the Fourth Hague Convention.

No special measure was taken to this end with regard to the active Civic Guard, the members of which wear complete uniforms and receive military instruction.† As the Reservists were not in the same case, a royal decree dealing with them was issued on August 5th, 1914, as stated above.

Published in the *Moniteur Belge* of August 6th, the text of this decree was as follows:—

“In virtue of Articles 4 and 82 of the law of September 9th, 1897.

“Referring to our decrees determining the towns or communes of the country where the Civic Guard is on active service.

“And further, the decrees determining the different uniforms of the Civic Guard;

“And seeing that in the interests of national defence, as also in those of public order, there is occasion to call up all the Reserves of the Civic Guard;

“At the proposal of our Minister of the Interior,

“We have decreed and do decree:

“ART. 1.—The Reserves of the Civic Guard in all the communes of the Kingdom are called up.

“ART. 2.—The men of the Civic Guard called up by the present decree are to wear conspicuously, as distinctive signs:

“1. On the left arm an armlet of the national colours.

“2. In caps or hats a cockade of the same colours.

“ART. 3.—Our Minister of the Interior is charged with the execution of the present decree.

“Given at Brussels, August 5th, 1914.

“ALBERT.”

On the same day (August 5th) the Minister of the Interior, to whom the Civic Guard was still amenable at the time, sent a circular in the following terms to all the provincial Governors:—

“I have the honour to inform you that in the interests of national defence and of public order and safety, a royal decree of August 5th, 1914, calls up all the Reserves of the Civic Guard throughout the Kingdom.

“The citizen militia in question will have to provide their own armament for the time being.

“On the other hand, the men called up who are not provided with uniforms are to wear preferably the blue blouse, and as distinctive badges:—

“1. On the left arm an armlet of the national colours.

“2. In caps or hats a cockade of the same colours.

“The wearing of these badges is absolutely obligatory to enable those concerned to benefit, in case of need, by the laws and rights of war.

“In order to enjoy the said advantages, members of the corps in question must further have at their head a person responsible for his subordinates; they must bear arms openly, and observe the laws and usages of war in their operations.

“The badges prescribed above will be forwarded to you at once by my Department, to be distributed in the various communes of your province.

“It must be borne in mind that according to the laws of war, acts of hostility, that is to say, armed resistance and attack upon isolated enemy soldiers, and direct

* In what purports to be a scientific study (see below, p. 41 n.) Dr. Clemen, Professor of Bonn University, nevertheless writes, on p. 36 of his work, at the beginning of 1916—that is to say, a year and a half after Belgium had passed under German administration—that *all males of from 20 to 40 years old* form part of the reserves of the Civic Guard.

† The total effective of the active Civic Guard is about 44,000 men.

intervention in battles or encounters, are never permitted to those who neither form part of the army, nor of the Civic Guard, nor of a Volunteer Corps observing military laws, obeying a leader, and wearing a distinctive badge.

“Neglect of these important rules will not only expose individuals or small groups who commit such acts of hostility without possessing the status of belligerents to summary repression, but may furnish a pretext for reprisals inflicted on the entire population.

“I have, in fact, already recalled these various prescriptions in a circular sent yesterday to the communal authorities, and it is essential that the attention of the population should be specially drawn to them.”

The circular of August 4th, alluded to in the last paragraph, has already been mentioned above; the complete text is reproduced on p. 289 *et seq.*

The twofold mention of the interests of national defence and of public order in the preambles of the royal decree and of the ministerial circular recalled the two legal functions of the Civic Guard, and exactly expressed the intention of the Government, which, when it called up this public force, proposed to ensure the maintenance of order by organising patrols, and to enable the military authorities eventually to allot garrison duty and certain duties in the rear to the Reservists of the Civic Guard, thus relieving the regular army to some extent, and causing the Civic Guard to participate in national defence within these restricted limits.

The intentions of the Government are still more clearly manifested by the fact that on August 4th, 1914, they did not propose the mobilisation of the Civic Guard to the Legislative Chambers, as the Constitution empowered them to do, for the very reason that when unmobilised it remained at the disposal of the civil authorities for the maintenance of public order, at any rate until the contingent proclamation of a state of siege.

The royal decree of August 8th made the wearing of the blue blouse obligatory, and insisted anew upon the necessity of bearing arms in a conspicuous manner. Here is the text:—

“By virtue of Article 72 of the law of September 9th, 1897;

“And referring to our decree of August 5th, 1914, calling up the Reserves of the Civic Guard of all the communes in the Kingdom, and determining the distinctive badges to be worn in a conspicuous manner by the men belonging to these units;

“On the proposal of our Minister of the Interior,

“We have decreed and do decree:

“ART. 1.—The wearing of the blue blouse is obligatory for Reservists of the Civic Guard called up by royal decree on August 5th, 1914.

“ART. 2.—The weapons borne by members of the above-named units must be carried openly.

“ART. 3.—Our Minister of the Interior is charged with the execution of the present decree.

“Given at our General Headquarters, August 8th, 1914.

“ALBERT.”

The circular despatched by the Minister of the Interior on August 8th informs provincial Governors of this decree, and prescribes its execution in the following terms:—

“I have the honour to inform you that a royal decree of August 8th, 1914, makes the wearing of the blue blouse obligatory for Reservists of the Civic Guard recently called up by the royal decree of August 5th last.

“I beg further to call your attention to Article 2 of the decree in question, directing that the weapons borne by members of the above-mentioned units should be worn openly, *i.e.*, in such a manner as to be visible to the enemy. Hidden weapons, such as daggers, revolvers, &c., must not therefore be carried as the principal arms.

“Have the goodness, *Monsieur le Gouverneur*, to communicate these Regulations to the communes in your province without delay.

“The Minister,”

“PAUL BERRYER.”

By determining the distinctive badges to be worn by the Reservists of the Civic Guard called up for service, and by insisting on the strictly obligatory character of the wearing of these tokens; by recalling—notably in the circular of August 5th reproduced above—the other conditions (namely, the open bearing of arms, obedience

to a responsible leader, and the observance of the laws and usages of war) imposed by the Fourth Hague Convention on militia and volunteer corps desirous of benefiting by the laws and rights of war, the Government expressly interdicted all military action on the part of the Civic Guard until these various conditions had been strictly fulfilled.

As we have already stated above, the ministerial circular of August 5th was indeed in this connection an exact transcription of a passage in the circular of August 4th, addressed by the Minister of the Interior to all the communal authorities in the country.

It is incontestable that, these various conditions having been complied with, it would have been perfectly lawful for the members of these Civic Guards to take part in military operations. It may be added that the precise wording of the several royal decrees and ministerial circulars excludes any possibility of mistake as to their meaning. The decrees and circulars of August 4th and 5th reached the hands of the authorities in nearly the whole of the Belgian communes. The two documents of August 8th, which, save in so far as they made the wearing of the blue blouse obligatory, merely confirmed previous instructions, were also received in an immense majority of the communes.

The determination of the distinctive badges to be worn by the members of these Guards became necessary from the moment when the Reserves were called up, even if the services to be demanded of them should be confined to police duties. By virtue of its legal status the Civic Guard was, in fact, capable of being employed in the defence of the territory; there was reason to suppose that the enemy was aware of this, and it was essential to act accordingly. It was therefore of the utmost importance that the German troops should not come into contact with patrols of the Civic Guard unprovided with distinctive badges.

Thus the royal decrees and the ministerial circulars which specify these badges no more indicate that the Belgian Government purposed to make the Civic Guard take part in the hostilities than the decision they came to at the same time to arm the officials and superintendents of the Woods and Waters, and of the Excise and Customs manifested an intention of diverting these persons from their proper functions.

* * *

As a fact, the military authorities never employed the Civic Guards recently called up in war operations, nor even in the auxiliary services of the army. Before employing them in any service whatever the authorities made it perfectly clear that they intended to confine their activities to the maintenance of public order and safety.

Indeed, immediately after the decrees of August 5th and 8th, the Belgian Government, while preparing to furnish all the Civic Guards recently called up with the distinctive badges, *without which they were forbidden to arm themselves*, was careful to notify the German Government, through the intermediary of the Spanish Minister at Brussels, and the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin, who had charge of Belgian interests in Germany, of their decisions touching the calling up of the Reserve of the Civic Guard throughout the Kingdom, and also touching the arming of the officials of the Woods and Waters, and the Excise and Customs.

The military authorities who, in virtue of the state of siege obtaining, had replaced the civil authorities in all matters pertaining to the maintenance of order and the policing of the country, and who had consequently taken over the command of the Civic Guard, were informed of this diplomatic notification by the Minister of the Interior on August 8th; it was agreed that they should be advised by telegram exactly when practical effect might be given to the notification.

On August 12th the Minister of the Interior, having been advised that the decisions of the Belgian Government had been communicated to the Imperial Government, transmitted this information to the military authorities. The letter at once notified their intention of employing the Reservists of the Civic Guard solely in their normal police duties, and in the maintenance of public security and order.

On August 13th the Minister of the Interior sent the telegram reproduced below to the provincial Governors, to be transmitted to the communal authorities, who, even under the *régime* of a state of siege, retained the functions delegated to them

by the military Governors in all matters relating to the police and the maintenance of order.

"It is essential at once to notify the communal authorities that, in pursuance of a communication from the Minister for War, the military authorities do not propose at present to employ the Reservists of the Civic Guard recently called up in any combatant capacity, and that consequently the latter must confine themselves to the performance of their police duties, and to the maintenance of public order and safety."

From the above it will be seen that the Belgian Government, thanks to the precautionary measures adopted, was absolutely irreproachable in all matters connected with the calling up of the Reserves of the Civic Guard, both from the standpoint of international law and that of its responsibility to its nationals.

However, to avoid even the possibility of contact between the hostile troops and the Civic Guard just called up, the Minister of the Interior further sent the following circular to the provincial Governors by telegram, on August 18th :—

"By my telegram of August 13th, I informed you that, in pursuance of a communication from the Minister for War, the military authorities do not propose at present to employ the Reservists of the Civic Guard recently called up in any combatant capacity, and that consequently the latter must confine themselves to the performance of their police duties, and to the maintenance of public order and safety.

"It follows from these instructions that the blouse and the badges prescribed in my circulars of August 5th and 8th, 1914, are only to be worn in the exercise of these police functions, and in those districts not as yet occupied, and not directly threatened, by the enemy.

"It also follows that all bearing of arms, whether visible or invisible, must be avoided in those parts of the country where there might be reason to fear armed conflict with the enemy.

"Infringements of these regulations might have the most disastrous results both for the Reservists themselves and for the civil population generally."

This precaution was salutary, for at the time the Belgian Government had already but too many proofs of their adversary's contempt for the prescriptions of the Hague Convention. They were accordingly beginning to fear that the German commanders might refuse, as they did during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71,* to recognise the blue blouse and the armlet as sufficiently distinctive signs within the meaning of Article I. of the Regulations concerning the laws and usages of war on land. Such a refusal would indeed have been wholly unjustifiable, for the blue blouse is not the ordinary costume of the Belgian peasants, but the historic uniform of the patriots of the Brabant Revolution and the Revolution of 1830.

* * *

The instructions issued by the Government were most scrupulously carried out. None of the Civic Guard called up on August 5 participated, in any way or at any point of the territory whatever, in military action. The Prefatory Note of the "White Book" itself formally admits this (p. 3). But far from connecting the fact that the German troops never came into contact with any Civic Guards wearing the blue blouse and the tricoloured armlet and cockade, with the measures taken by the Belgian Government to avoid such contact, the authors of the Note affirm that members of the Civic Guard took part in civilian dress in the operations of the *francs-tireurs* (p. 3).† By a truly bewildering process of reasoning they persuade themselves that the extreme prudence shown by the Belgian Government was in itself an evidence of duplicity. "If," says the Note drawn up in the Imperial Foreign Office and expressing the views of the German Government, "the Belgian Government claimed, in a communication transmitted to the German Government

* See the Manual of the German Great General Staff, *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*, p. 7, note, English edition, p. 61, note.

† The Report of the German Military Bureau concerning events at Louvain even goes so far, as we have shown above (p. 12), as to accuse the Civic Guard of having organised the "rising" in this town. General von Boehn, the Commandant of the German forces at Louvain, actually declares that the Civic Guard formed the nucleus of the bands of *francs-tireurs* (p. 242).

through the medium of a neutral Power, that they had taken all the measures proper to the occasion,* this only proves that they were in a position to comply with the prescribed conditions; but in any case, no such measures were carried out in the districts traversed by the German troops" (p. 3).

The "White Book" therefore suggests that if the Belgian Government did not carry out the said measures, when they were perfectly well able to do so, it was probably because they would not, hoping, no doubt, to profit the more by the insidious attacks of the civil population, inasmuch as they had allayed the suspicions of the enemy by their communication to the German Government. This interpretation of the Imperial Government's views is confirmed by the other assertion in the "White Book" already quoted, and also figuring in the Foreign Office Note, namely, that the Belgian Government did not prevent the *francs-tireurs*' operations, although they might have done so, "for it would certainly have been easy for them to have given their agents, such as burgomasters, soldiers and members of the Civic Guard, the necessary instructions, which would have had the effect of curbing the passionate and artificially provoked excitement of the population" (p. 5).

We shall refute these insinuations sufficiently if we point out that all the instructions given by the Belgian Government concerning the part to be played and the attitude to be maintained by the Civic Guards were dominated by the fundamental rule, incessantly reiterated since the beginning in the month of August, which forbade them to take part in hostilities unless they were provided with badges and carried arms openly (see more especially the ministerial circulars of August 4th, 5th and 8th, 1914).

Moreover, if the Belgian Government, when they called up the Reservists of the Civic Guard, had been guilty of the double-dealing apparently imputed to them, it is obvious that they would have favoured by every means in their power the reinforcement of the effectives of this body, the calling up of which would, to some extent, have served to mask a *levée en masse* of the population.

Now, far from having acted on these lines, the Government, in a circular of August 11th, signed by the Minister of the Interior and addressed to the provincial Governors, gave instructions discouraging the admission of volunteers into the ranks of the Civic Guard. The following is the text of this circular:—

"It appears from numerous requests which have reached me that in a great many communes citizens are anxious to be enrolled as volunteers in the Reserves of the Civic Guard recently called up by the Royal Decree of August 5th, 1914.

"It is not at present possible to submit the engagements into which these parties desire to enter to the tribunals.

"Nevertheless, to the end that the patriotic services offered by the said parties may be turned to account, it would be well to advise the communal authorities to create auxiliary bodies of police, of a non-combatant character, into which all men of good-will who desire to form part of them may be incorporated.

"These bodies of auxiliaries might collaborate with the Civic Guard in the performance of the various *police duties* that might be assigned to it.

"The Minister,

"PAUL BERRYER."

Is it possible to suppose that the Belgian Government would have been checked by a scruple as to legality if they had intended to foment a "people's war" in defiance of the prescriptions of international law? Is it conceivable that they would have diverted the eager volunteers who offered themselves to an auxiliary police force of a non-combatant character?

On the other hand, it is easy to understand why they hesitated to permit enrolments, not strictly regular according to law, in the Civic Guard, which might eventually be called upon by the military authorities for auxiliary war services. It is no less obvious why, when the military authorities had formally declared that they had no intention of employing the Reservists of the Civic Guard recently called up on combatant service, but proposed to confine them strictly and exclusively to their police duties, and the maintenance of public law and order,† the Belgian Government, relaxing the severity of the principle laid down in the circular of August 11th, permitted such engagements thereafter. This decision, we may note in passing, further shows that the legal impossibility of accepting such

* Distribution of badges and appointment of responsible leaders.

† See, on p. 16, the telegram on this subject addressed by the Minister of the Interior to the Governors of provinces.

engagements was not absolute; the Government would not, certainly, have been held up by this difficulty had they contemplated the organisation of a *francs-tireurs*' war.

And yet the Belgian Government, which never even contemplated the constitution of volunteer corps conforming to the conditions laid down in Article I. of the Hague Regulations, which restricted itself to calling up a militia of such limited effectives as the Civic Guard,* even refraining, until the decision of the military authorities mentioned above had taken place, from stiffening these effectives by the addition of a certain number of volunteers—this Government, according to the German "White Book," tolerated, and even favoured, the illegal creation of irregular bands of *francs-tireurs*, of which Civic Guards without uniforms or badges formed the nucleus (pp. 3, 5, 236 and 242)! An organisation of this kind worked more efficiently at Louvain than elsewhere, they assert, because this town was the official quarters of the Commandant of the Civic Guard (pp. 236 and 242). The Report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry concludes, as we know, that "the misdeeds of the Civic Guard are revealed to the whole civilised world by the typical case of Louvain."†

To that civilised world invoked by the "White Book" the Belgian Government denounces the methods of argument adopted by the German Government.

* * *

The "White Book" maintains, as we have already stated, that Belgian soldiers in civilian dress took part in the "people's war." In the Prefatory Note drawn up in the Imperial Foreign Office, the accusation is made in terms by no means categorical, and almost in dubious form; the Note merely says, in fact, that "apparently (*anscheinend*) Belgian soldiers in civilian dress, who wore no military badges, took part in the operations of the *francs-tireurs*." The Report of the Military Bureau of Enquiry concerning events at Louvain is, on the other hand, perfectly explicit, and declares that "Belgian soldiers disguised as civilians hid in the houses, in order to fire on the German troops, which were apparently retreating, at a favourable moment, while remaining themselves unseen." It does not even hesitate to assert that "the Belgian Government has never ventured to speak of the participation of corps of Belgian regulars in this action" (p. 236).‡ The Infantry General, von Boehn, Commandant of the IXth Reserve Army Corps, who was at Louvain at the time of the "popular rising," declares repeatedly in his deposition (App. D 1) that among the *francs-tireurs* there were many soldiers in civilian dress, as was proved by the identification discs and the portions of military uniforms worn under civil costumes (pp. 240, 241 and 242). In order to give greater plausibility to this allegation, the General asserts that during the fighting a uniform was frequently found beside the empty haversack of a Belgian soldier, without a corresponding corpse; "there can be no doubt that the owner had made off in civilian dress." He further says that civilian costumes, and notably clerical garments, were found in the haversacks of dead Belgian soldiers. Pursuing this line of thought, he tells how a dozen priests are said to have fired on a German patrol; when these men were arrested they were found to be wearing military identification discs, linen and boots§ (see also App. D 8, 19 and 38). Captain Karge, Com-

* The reference here is, of course, to that portion of the Civic Guard which forms the Reserve in time of peace. As we know, the authors of the "White Book" make no distinction between the active and non-active sections in their consideration of the part played by the Belgian Civic Guard. Certain corps of the former, the members of which wear a complete uniform, took part in the fighting.

† It is important to bear in mind that these extravagant assertions are not extracts from the depositions of this or that subaltern officer; they figure either in the Prefatory Note of the "White Book," drawn up in the Imperial Foreign Office, in the General Report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry relating to Louvain, or in the final portion (which purports to be the fully substantiated expert conclusion (*Gutachten*), of the deposition of General von Boehn, Commandant of the IXth Reserve Army Corps (App. D 1, pp. 241 and 242). Special importance must be given to this deposition, which, in virtue of its author's rank, figures at the head of the fifty appendices of the chapter in the "White Book" dealing with events at Louvain.

‡ The authorised French translation of the German "White Book" gives the passage as follows: "Jamais le Gouvernement belge lui-même n'a osé dire un seul mot de cette participation d'un corps de troupes régulières de l'armée belge" (p. 10).

§ This ridiculous story, related by Sergeant-Major Predöhl, and incorporated without reservation by General von Boehn in the final portion of his deposition, which is described as *Gutachten* (expert opinion), refutes itself. Tried by Court-Martial, these twelve disguised soldiers are said to have been acquitted, because it was impossible to prove which of them had fired! (p. 242).

mandant of the Constabulary detachment of the IInd Army Corps, declares he had heard that Belgian soldiers had been sent back to their homes to fight against the Germans in civil costume (App. A 3, p. 98). A professor of the Normal School (*Seminarlehrer*) of Aerschot is said to have told Karge that the citizens of the town had received fugitive Belgian soldiers into the houses and dressed them as civilians; that these soldiers had undoubtedly joined the Civic Guard, and that together they had made the subsequent attack (p. 100).

In reply to the audacious assertion of the Military Bureau of Inquiry at Berlin concerning the participation of "a corps of Belgian Regulars" in the pretended "insurrection" of the Louvain population, a participation as to which the Belgian Government never dared to say a single word, the King's Government declares most explicitly that *at no period during the campaign*, and more especially during the operations round Antwerp, was there any attempt at concerted action between the Belgian army and detachments of soldiers disguised as civilians, who, aided by citizens, are supposed to have fought in districts occupied by the German army.

As to the allegations of the "White Book" concerning the presence of Belgian soldiers behind the German lines, they invite the following remarks: (a) The presence of isolated Belgian soldiers behind the enemy lines is not at all surprising; all retreating armies leave stragglers behind them, who in friendly countries don civilian clothes to avoid surrender; (b) the discovery after fighting of abandoned haversacks and uniforms may be explained in the same manner.

The presence of civilian garments in the haversacks of dead soldiers was due to the fact that many Reservists wore civilian under-garments, such as waistcoats and jackets, under their uniforms as a precaution against bad weather.

Civilian garments, sometimes even feminine ones, have frequently been found on German prisoners. Such incidents have never been looked upon as anything but the result of pillage in Belgium.

The foregoing considerations are of a general order. As to the particular events of which Louvain was the scene, witnesses are unanimous in affirming that no acts of hostility against the German troops took place in this town to their knowledge. The individual stragglers who may have been behind the German lines in Louvain, cannot therefore be incriminated any more than the inhabitants. One clearly established fact gives an irrefutable character to this affirmation: the list of persons massacred by the Germans at Louvain, whose bodies it has been possible to identify (this was the case with nearly all of them), does not contain the name of any soldier (see Document 31, Section III., of Chapter V. of Part II. of the present volume). Moreover, the German authorities have never revealed the inscriptions (names and regimental numbers) of any of the identification discs said to have been found on the supposed soldiers in civilian dress who are accused of having fired on the German troops at Louvain or elsewhere.

* * *

In order to show that the *francs-tireurs* were supported by the Belgian Government the "White Book," as we know, suggests that they had machine guns at their disposal.

True, the Prefatory Note drawn up in the Imperial Foreign Office is careful not to commit itself to this audacious statement. The thesis is, however, upheld in the Reports of the Military Bureau of Inquiry at Berlin upon occurrences at Andenne (p. 107), Dinant (p. 122), and Louvain (p. 234), as well as in a certain number of appendices (see more especially App. 25 [Tintigny], App. A 5 [Aerschot], App. B 3 [Andenne], App. C 2 [Dinant], App. D 2, 29, 37, 38, 40, 42, 46, 49 [Louvain]).

The so-called ascertained facts, save that dealt with in App. C 2 (where it is asserted that at Dinant machine guns were installed in a corner house),* are nothing but suppositions and deductions. The Report of the Military Bureau of Berlin on occurrences at Louvain, itself, only ventures to suggest that "the firing in certain quarters sounded as if machine guns were being used" (p. 234). And yet Major von Klewitz declares that on the morning of August 26th a row of bullets was

* See p. 11.

observed on the gate of the railway station at Louvain,* whence he concluded that civilians had used machine guns against the German troops (App. D 2). Neither at Louvain, Aerschot or Andenne did the other witnesses *see* machine guns in the hands of the *francs-tireurs*; they merely heard, or thought they heard, the characteristic crackle. Such was the case, among others, of Captain von Esmarch (App. D 46), who distinctly heard the tack-tack of machine guns; bullets were flying round him in considerable numbers. Captain Schaefer tells how it was commonly reported in Louvain that a machine gun was installed *in the belfry of the church*; † although the fire of this machine gun continued for several hours intermittently, Schaefer omits to say whether the rumour was confirmed in the sequel, and the tribunal of the XVIIIth Reserve Division, before which he made his deposition, seems to have been equally indifferent on this point (App. D 49). The principal depositions concerning Louvain, those of General von Boehn, Commandant of the IXth Reserve Army Corps (App. D 1), and Major von Manteuffel, ‡ commanding the 15th Reserve Dépôt (App. D 3), make no mention of machine guns, although these depositions contain special sections in which the two officers give evidence as experts (*gutachtlich*). Only one witness, Sub-Lieutenant Lindeiner (von Wildau) *thinks* he noticed at Tintigny (near Arlon) a civilian working a machine gun at the first floor window of a house, some 20 paces from him (App. 25). He even *thinks so with certainty (sic)*, but the very terms he uses show that the officer was not really sure that he saw this.§

The system is very clearly revealed; the deponents dare not make direct assertions, but the authorities hope to benefit by the doubts raised by means of vague statements and insinuations.

It is scarcely necessary to say that all these allegations are utterly baseless. At the beginning of the war the Belgian army had a very limited supply of machine guns; none of these were entrusted to the so-called *francs-tireurs*.

Moreover, the Germans were unable to discover any machine guns in the course of their perquisitions in houses, nor did they find any among the ruins of the buildings that were set on fire (see, for instance, p. 246 of the "White Book"). In certain places they themselves made use of machine guns against the population, and they tell the truth—though not the whole truth—when they declare they heard the sound of such guns, notably at Louvain and at Andenne. It may further be noted that the manipulation of machine guns requires an apprenticeship.

The use of grenades and hand-bombs by Belgian civilians is also denounced in various passages of the "White Book." Essentially absurd, this accusation is annihilated by the fact that even the Belgian army in the field possessed no explosives of the kind in 1914.

* * *

Whatever the Belgian Government do, they find their intentions misrepresented and distorted. In spite of the measures they took, or caused to be taken, none of which were unknown to the German authorities, the Imperial Foreign Office, as the exponent of the views of the German Government, thinks itself justified in pronouncing judgment against them as follows, in the Prefatory Note of the "White Book": "The Belgian Government must therefore be held entirely responsible for the awful blood-guiltiness that weighs upon Belgium" (p. 5).

It will not be out of place here to recall the principle laid down by the Declaration of Saint Petersburg in 1868: that the sole legitimate aim of warfare is to weaken the military forces of the enemy. Von Moltke, moved to revolt against this doctrine in his correspondence with Professor Bluntschli, maintains, on the contrary, that all the resources of the enemy country—finances, railways, means of subsistence—and even the *prestige of the enemy's Government*, should be attacked.|| It is evidently this plan of action which has inspired the German Government; we must not forget this in judging the campaign of calumny they have undertaken against the Belgian Government.

* This statement is absolutely untrue.

† He gives no further details.

‡ See p. 235 of the present volume.

§ See above references to other appendices dealing with machine guns.

|| Recalling this discussion, the Manual of the Great General Staff of the German army adopts Field-Marshal von Moltke's opinion. *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*, p. 2, note. English edition, p. 52 and note.

There is, however, no point on which the latter might have legitimately thought themselves less open to remonstrance from the German Government than that of having omitted certain precautions in preparing the defence of the country. The "White Book" expresses itself as follows in this connection :—

"The Belgian Government has for many years past reckoned with the eventuality of being implicated in hostilities, should war break out between France and Germany ; it is an established fact that they began to prepare for mobilisation at least a week before the German army entered Belgium. Hence the Government was perfectly well able to provide the civil population with military badges and appoint responsible leaders for it, in as far as they intended to make use of it in military operations" (p. 3).

The Imperial German Government was one of the guarantors of the neutrality of Belgium, and only a year before the war it had given the Budget Committee of the Reichstag formal assurances of its intention of respecting its engagements.* A section of Belgian opinion was even opposed to the development of the military organisation of Belgium, on the ground of the faith due to treaties. And it is this same Government which in the Prefatory Note of the "White Book" gives the Belgian Government to understand that they have only themselves to blame for having relied too confidently upon Germany's pledge !

* Session of April 29th, 1913.

CHAPTER II.

ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE BELGIAN CIVIL POPULATION.

SECTION I.

HOSTILE ACTS.

According to an article, published in a German review, by Privy Councillor Bode, Director-General of the Royal Museums of Berlin, 26,000 houses have been destroyed or damaged in Belgium. It may be taken for granted that this estimate does not exceed the actual number of buildings which have suffered from the German invasion. Dr. Bode makes no distinction between houses destroyed in the course of fighting and bombardment, or, generally speaking, for military reasons, and those set on fire by way of "reprisals." But, on the one hand, the bombardment of the towns of Antwerp, Liège, and Namur lasted but a short time and caused comparatively little damage, and the destruction wrought by the Belgian Engineer Corps was inconsiderable save in the immediate neighbourhood of Antwerp. On the other, 2,117 houses were burnt without any justification on the ground of military necessity in the town of Louvain, and the adjacent communes of Kessel-Loo, Corbeek-Loo, Hérent and Héverlé.* From these two statements it may be deduced that the 26,000 damaged houses were, for the most part, destroyed under the pretext of punishment inflicted for the supposed "*francs-tireurs* war" so unjustly imputed to the Belgian civil population.

His Majesty's Government has received precise information, from Belgian sources, as to the number of houses destroyed only in respect of four out of the nine provinces of the country. From the returns in their possession it appears that 5,833 houses were destroyed in Brabant, 5,243 in the province of Namur, 3,553 in the province of Antwerp, and 3,444 in the province of Liège, making a total of 18,073 houses in these four provinces. For obvious reasons, the Belgian Government is not in a position to guarantee the absolute accuracy of these returns, which, moreover, it has been impossible to make on a uniform plan throughout the various provinces. A large number of houses, in addition to these, were destroyed by way of "reprisals," notably in the province of Luxemburg, as well as in Hainault and East Flanders. Limburg suffered comparatively little. The destruction in West Flanders seems to have been due almost exclusively to bombardments and to considerations of a military nature.

Nearly 5,000 non-combatant Belgians, including several hundreds of women, old men, and children, were put to death by the German troops, in nearly all cases without inquiry or sentence.

The slaughter of 5,000 civilians, and the destruction by fire of 20,000 houses, stand to the account of the most formidable army in the world in their dealings with the inoffensive population of Belgium.

Further, thousands of Belgians have been sent to Germany as civilian prisoners. Violence and robbery of every kind have been committed in all parts of the country under the indulgent eyes, if not with the actual connivance or by the orders, of German officers. Mock executions have taken place in great numbers.

In justification of these crimes, the German Government accuses the civil population of armed resistance in defiance of international law. In the "White Book" it insists, notably, on the truly extraordinary occurrence of an attack made by the inhabitants of Dinant (*Volkskampf*) on the German troops massed to the east of the town (p. 117), and tries to gain credence for the story of popular risings (*Volksaufstand*) in Aerschot (p. 91), Andenne (p. 107), and Louvain (p. 233), against the troops occupying these towns.

* * *

The documents on which the Military Bureau at Berlin relies are statements by officers commanding the units which have gained such sinister notoriety in Belgium, and also by various non-commissioned officers and private soldiers. These declarations were, for the most part, called forth after the event by a desire to allay the indignation caused throughout the whole world by events at Visé, Battice, Herve, Dinant, Andenne, Namur, Louvain, Aerschot, Termonde, and many other small towns and villages.

This may be clearly established by examination of the dates on which the appendices (*Anlagen*), which figure in the "White Book," were drawn up, or appear to have been drawn up, for some of them are undated. If we eliminate App. 1 C 74 and D 50, containing maps and an undated deposition of an uncertain period, the 209 remaining documents may be divided into

* The respective figures for each commune mentioned above are:—1,120, 461, 129, 312, and 95 houses destroyed by fire.

two categories. The first, comprising sixty documents, includes extracts from war diaries and military reports, bearing dates of the months of August and September, 1914, or undated, and further, some twenty dated depositions of the month of September, fifteen of which deal with the burning of Louvain. It may be admitted that the majority of these documents were written immediately after the events described, or shortly afterwards, and as soon as circumstances allowed. Their composition may be taken as due to the initiative of the German authorities themselves, though this is far from indubitable in the case of a certain number of them. To adopt this point of view is to make a very generous concession as to the spontaneity of German action; notably, it gives a negative reply to the question as to whether the inquiry into events at Louvain ordered in September by the Governor-General of occupied Belgium, Baron von der Goltz, should be attributed to considerations of foreign policy or not. It is, however, incontestable that a contrary opinion might be upheld by very weighty arguments.* Moreover, a very large number of documents in the first category had necessarily to be drawn up under any circumstances. The documents of the second category, 149 in number, the majority of them the depositions of officers and private soldiers, bear dates subsequent to September, 1914. It is justifiable to suppose that they were evoked by the necessity laid upon Germany to counteract the universal indignation aroused by her methods of war. The distinction made above is based upon the fact that it was more particularly during the month of August that "reprisals" were carried out upon the civil population, whereas the measures taken by the German authorities from the month of September onwards may, in a general way, be referred to motives more essentially military.† Although this classification is not absolutely precise, it corresponds unquestionably to actual facts in general.

Among the documents appended to the Report of the Military Bureau of Berlin concerning events at Aerschot, four are dated November, 1914, and one is dated January, 1915. The four depositions annexed to the report on the Andenne massacres bear date November, December, and January. As to events at Dinant, the inquiry, which took the form of the interrogation of witnesses, really began only in December; it is embodied in seventy-one documents—one only is dated November, 1914, ten are dated December, 1914, nine are dated January, twenty-two February, and twenty-nine March, 1915. The sixteen remaining documents, exclusive of the general report, which compose the *dossier* relating to massacre and arson at Dinant, consist, with the exception of one undated deposition, solely of extracts from war diaries and military reports, apparently drawn up immediately after the events. The inquiry into occurrences at Louvain, ordered by the Governor-General, Baron von der Goltz, took place from September 17th to September 27th, 1914. After an interval of a month and a half, the interrogatories were suddenly resumed in the middle of November, unquestionably under the pressure of universal public opinion. The depositions received in the course of the September inquiry already, indeed, constituted an elaborate statement as to the conduct of the German troops at Louvain, conduct which Major von Klewitz declared had been exemplary (App. D 2). The second inquiry was prolonged until March, 1915; it occupies thirty-two documents out of the fifty appended to the Report of the Military Bureau concerning the burning of the town.

From the fact that nearly three-quarters of the documents contained in the "White Book" bear dates more than a month subsequent to the events with which they deal, and that over a third of them—seventy-four exactly—were not drawn up till 1915, we may conclude that the methods of war adopted by the German army in Belgium caused no sort of emotion in Germany. Public opinion there, educated in the idea that in war time anything is legitimate which tends to ensure the triumph of the German cause, saw nothing revolting in their ruthless character. Not until an echo of the indignation aroused in foreign countries reached the Empire did the German authorities, taken unawares, make an attempt to justify their deeds. There can be no possible doubt on this point, save perhaps as regards events at Louvain.

Thus, about three-quarters of the documents published in the "White Book" were called into being by Germany's recognition of the fact that some defence was necessary. Several of the depositions, dated September, 1914, concerning the burning of Louvain—the horror of which seems to have made some impression, even in Germany—betray a very obvious anxiety on the part of the German authorities not only to establish facts but also to exculpate themselves. Hence, in the majority of the documents which figure in the "White Book" we can recognise only such value as is attached to the declarations of the defence in penal proceedings; the greater part of them are not impartial reports, but special pleadings.

* * *

These documents often bear the manifest impress of invention and improbability. In spite of their obviously suggestive character, the Military Bureau at Berlin seems to have accepted

* The Military Bureau of Inquiry expresses the opinion that, if the punishment inflicted on Louvain has been so hotly discussed, it is mainly because the enemies of the German nation, more especially the Belgian Government, have spread abroad throughout the world news calculated to prejudice public opinion against Germany by means of their press, their diplomatic representatives, and emissaries sent in all directions (p. 233).

† Certain "reprisals," however, took place in September, and even in October in some places, notably at Termonde; but, whereas no document in the "White Book" deals with the sack and burning of this town, a very limited number of documents bear upon other events which occurred during these two months (they are given in App. 49, 50 and 66).

them without objective examination, and with a firm determination to ratify each and all of the deeds committed in Belgium by the German troops.

How, for instance, can we admit the existence in Aerschot of a plot against the life of the German officer in command, when the town had been occupied since the morning by immense bodies of troops, when the inhabitants had given up all weapons several days before, and when it would have been impossible for them to meet and act in concert? It may be pointed out that the version given by the Military Bureau of Berlin differs widely from the first German version. The son of the Burgomaster who, at the time of the sack of the town, was accused of having murdered the German commandant, is no longer the sole criminal. The German authorities have no doubt recognised the inadequacy of this accusation (which has, moreover, been most categorically denied) as an excuse for the devastation and systematic pillage of the town of Aerschot, and the massacre of 150 of its inhabitants, the Burgomaster, his son, and his brother among them. To justify the execution of these hapless creatures, a certain number of whom were chosen by lot, they now formulate a general accusation against the inhabitants. "The complicity of the whole of the Burgomaster's family," says the "White Book" (p. 92), "shows how methodically (*planmässig*) the Belgian authorities collaborated (*mitwirkten*) in treacherous enterprises of this nature—alas! only too frequent!—against the German troops."

At Louvain, again, "the direction of the treacherous outbreak must have been in the hands of a superior authority. Everything indicates that such authorities took part in its organisation. Louvain was the official residence of the Commander of the so-called Civic Guard. Immediately before the revolt, this commander was still in the town, and the movement was initiated by the despatch to Louvain of a number of undisciplined young men without distinctive badges, who hid in the houses with soldiers disguised as civilians in order, themselves unseen, to fire at a favourable moment on the German troops who were apparently retiring. The Belgian Government itself has never dared to speak of the participation of corps of Belgian Regulars in this action. It is a case of the treacherous action of the *francs-tireurs*, who were enthusiastically received and sheltered by the population. The misdeeds of the Civic Guard are, by the typical case of Louvain, revealed to the whole civilised world" (p. 236).

It is useless to insist upon the truly extraordinary conception of the Civic Guard retained by the German authorities after eight months of study and investigation on the spot; the passage reproduced above is not an extract from any deposition, but figures in the report on events at Louvain drawn up by the Military Bureau of Inquiry itself.*

Be this as it may, it was the population of Louvain that suffered: according to information received by the permanent Deputation of the Provincial Council of Brabant, 2,117 buildings were burnt down at Louvain and in the suburban communes of Kessel-Loo, Corbeek-Loo, Hérent, and Héverlé, and over 200 civilians were killed.

The "White Book" makes it a reproach to the Belgian Commission of Inquiry that, on August 31st, 1914, it quoted (throughout with inverted commas) the testimony of a witness according to which the entire town had been destroyed; but, ten days later (September 10th), in its third report, the Commission, speaking in its own name, stated that only part of the town had been burnt. It may be pointed out that the Emperor William, in his telegram of September 4th, 1914, to the President of the United States, himself deplored the destruction of the town, with the exception of the beautiful Town Hall! †

The "White Book" refrains from giving any exact total indication on the subject of the damage done by the Germans at Louvain,‡ but it declares that if a "comparatively small" portion of the town suffered from the fire, it was thanks to the self-sacrificing spirit shown by the German troops, whose devoted efforts circumscribed the flames, which necessity—that knows no law—no doubt compelled them to kindle at various points in the town, as seems well established.

With regard to the massacres which bathed the town of Andenne in blood, it is very essential to quote the letter sent by the military authorities of Namur over the signature of Lieutenant-Colonel von Eulwege to the *Pax-Informationen*. It ran as follows (see *Frankfurter Zeitung* of January 6th, 1915, and Father Duhr's pamphlet *Der Lügegeist im Völkerring*, p. 62):—"The very careful personal inquiries I have made among a great variety of persons have yielded no confirmation to the story of the Curé of Andenne having incited the population to street fighting. Everybody at Andenne gives a different account of the events which took place on August 20th, 1914, and this is not surprising, for the majority of the inhabitants saw very little of the fighting properly so-called, having in their terror taken refuge in the cellars."

The "White Book" makes no allusion to this statement, dated December 8th, 1914, but on the other hand, it quotes the deposition made on November 21st by Major von Polentz:—"The fact that 100—a hundred—of my own men were injured exclusively by boiling water thrown over them shows that the attack was carefully arranged beforehand, and was one in which nearly the entire population (*fast die ganze Bevölkerung*) of the town of Andenne and its

* See p. 13.

† In its fifth report, dated September 25th, 1914, the Belgian Commission estimated the number of buildings burnt on the territory of the town of Louvain alone as 894, without including the University buildings and the Law Courts; the actual number, as we know, is 1,120. In view of German accusations, we may be allowed to point out the moderation shown by the Commission of Enquiry in this estimate.

‡ See also on this subject p. 239, paragraph 6.

suburbs took part" (p. 110). According to Eulwege, the majority of the inhabitants saw very little of the fighting because they were hiding in their cellars, whereas von Polentz accuses nearly the whole of these inhabitants of having taken part in the popular rising!

Such discrepancies are frequent in reports from German sources on events of which Belgium was the blood-stained scene. But the article published in the evening edition of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of January 6th, 1915, under the title, "The Night of Andenne," the special object of which was the exculpation of the Curé of Andenne, is truly typical in this respect. In this article the newspaper gives the lie to a narrative inserted in its own issue of September 8th, 1914, and communicated by "a well-known Frankfort jurist"; this correspondent, writing "in perfect good faith," as the newspaper asserts, had said that, according to accounts he had received, the Curé of Andenne had run about the streets of the town with a bell to give the signal for battle! Here, then, we have a well-known man of law, accustomed, we may suppose, to weighing evidence, who accepts this improbable story without any attempt to verify it, and does not hesitate to affirm the truth of it in writing, and to some extent publicly! What must we think of the credulity of the German common soldier when we see the fixed idea of the *francs-tireurs* annihilating the critical sense of a jurist to such a degree? How many other legends will vanish in the light of truth when, after the conclusion of peace, everyone will be able to speak out freely and fearlessly!

According to the "White Book," the population of the town of Dinant successfully held in check forces equal in strength to an entire army corps belonging to the best organised army in the world, and this with such stubborn determination that the bombardment of a certain number of houses was necessary to overcome it (p. 121).^{*} If this were true, it would indeed be a stupendous fact, for Dinant had but 7,700 inhabitants, a certain number of whom fled at the time of the bloody encounter between the French and German troops on August 15th, 1914. What actually happened at Dinant? The town, which lies on either bank of the Meuse, was first occupied by the French forces, which put it into a state of defence. A first engagement took place there on August 15th; after gaining a footing on the right bank, the German troops were driven back again. The report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry, established at the Prussian War Ministry, states that on August 17th the enemy's troops had retired to the left bank of the Meuse, and that, from this moment, Dinant and its suburbs, Leffe and Les Rivages, were clear of hostile troops of the Regular Army (p. 117). This error is of capital importance for a just appreciation of the value of the German report as evidence, for it forms the basis of the arguments which make it possible to incriminate the civil population. Now the German report itself points out a few lines further on that a German patrol, which penetrated into the heart of Dinant on August 21st, found the bridge there held by the enemy's forces (p. 117). Information derived from French military sources, and published in Note 128 of the *Bureau Documentaire Belge*,[†] makes it evident that between the 16th and the 23rd August it was the French patrols and outposts acting on the right bank of the river which held up the German reconnoitring parties that penetrated into the town and suburbs of Dinant on several occasions. It is, therefore, a falsification of facts to lay these legitimate acts of regular warfare to the charge of the civil population. By imputing these to the inhabitants and avenging them by terrible collective reprisals, the revelation of which filled the whole world with consternation, the commanders of the German troops were guilty of an abominable crime; the horror of this crime will not be attenuated by the depositions inserted in the "White Book." The list of the *identified* victims of the massacre at Dinant comprises 606 names; in other words, about 8 per cent. of the total population.[‡] It must be noted that an indeterminate number of persons wounded more or less slightly managed to escape death. Among the dead were 71 females, 39 children of both sexes under the age of sixteen, and 34 persons over seventy years old. These figures do not appear on any one of the 116 pages of the "White Book" devoted to the massacre, sack, and burning of Dinant. Is not this tantamount to an avowal that their enormity startled even the Germans themselves, who have deliberately suppressed them at the risk of once more imperilling that character of impartiality, the semblance of which the authors of the "White Book" have striven so hard to maintain?

The report of M. Tschoffen, the Public Prosecutor of Dinant, who was carried off to Germany as a civil prisoner and kept in prison at Cassel for three months, contains the following passage:

"The Germans *admit* that there were no *francs-tireurs* at Dinant.

"At Cassel, the Governor of the prison said to me: 'The military authorities at Berlin are now convinced that no one fired on the troops at Dinant.' I do not, of course, know what induced him to make this statement.

"Another admission:—General von Longchamp, Military Governor of the Province of Namur, talking to me of the occurrences at Dinant, said these very words to me: 'I found, from an inquiry I held on the subject, that no civilian fired on the troops at Dinant. But there were,

^{*} The systematic burning of the town followed.

[†] The *Bureau Documentaire Belge*, established at Havre, 52, Rue des Gobelins, publishes a systematic collection of documents (*Cahiers Documentaires*) bearing on the European War. The military information referred to appears on pp. 166 *et seq.* of the present volume.

[‡] The proportion of dead seems at a first glance rather higher, but it must be remembered that a certain number of the inhabitants of neighbouring villages were killed at Dinant.

perhaps, some French soldiers, disguised as civilians, who fired. And then, in the excitement of battle, there will be occasional excesses.'

"I may add that I found no one at Dinant who gave me the slightest reason to suppose that there was any truth in this hypothesis of the French soldiers."

These admissions are a dead letter for the authors of the "White Book," who uphold their thesis imperturbably. Their statements concerning other Belgian towns and villages, the scenes of German "reprisals," are no more to be unreservedly accepted than those which the German Governor of Namur, who has been living in the country for several months, and whose position makes him much more capable than the tribunal at Berlin of pronouncing a reasoned judgment on the events of August, 1914, has felt himself constrained to condemn as radically false, in view of obvious facts. The "White Book" makes no allusion to the differences of opinion among the German authorities as to the attitude of the people of Dinant: thus the *dossier* it submits to the judgment of the world stifles the voice not only of the Belgian witnesses, numbers of whom were interrogated, but even of those Germans whose honesty has not succumbed to reasons of State.

* * *

The truth, on which we cannot insist too often, is that neither in the four towns more especially dealt with in the "White Book," nor in any other places in the country did the population indulge in acts of hostility. Everywhere they obeyed the instructions of the Government and of the administrative and religious authorities. It is hardly necessary to point out once more how improbable it is that the inhabitants, who had given up their arms and were fully conscious of their weakness, should have been moved by a veritable access of madness to hurl themselves against the invading armies, when the atrocities committed by the German troops directly they entered Belgian territory on August 4th, 1914, were known throughout the land, and had struck terror into every heart? Is it conceivable that the inhabitants of Aerschot, Andenne, Dinant and Louvain, even had they not been instructed as to their duties, as they were from the very first days of the war by the Belgian Government and the communal authorities, should have dreamt of entering upon a struggle with the German forces on the 19th, 20th, 21st and 25th of August? At this period part of the Belgian population had already fled terror-stricken, setting an example to hundreds of thousands of their fellow-countrymen, who subsequently sought asylum in France, Holland and England.

If isolated acts of hostility were committed, how, even taking them as proven, could they justify collective "executions," often accompanied by refinements of cruelty? How could they excuse the massacre so far attested of nearly 5,000 inoffensive citizens of both sexes, of every age and condition; attacks upon family honour, brutalities of which women, children, and the ministers of religion were the victims; the burning of 20,000 houses, the devastation and pillage of entire districts?

His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Mechlin, Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur, and Monseigneur Rutten, Bishop of Liège, have been able to verify the extent of the disasters and to determine their causes. (See Part III, documents V, VI, IX, pp. 300, 308, and 322).

Monseigneur Heylen, in an energetic protest of April 10th against the Memorandum of the Prussian War Office of January 22nd, 1915,* gave an answer to the "White Book" in advance; the strong pro-German sympathies of this prelate before the war lend special weight to his declaration, certain passages of which we append:—

"We declare, in concert with all the inhabitants of our villages without exception, and with the whole Belgian people, that the story of Belgian *francs-tireurs* is a myth, an invention, and a calumny.

"It is obvious that the German army set foot on Belgian soil and invaded the country with a preconceived notion that they would meet groups of such combatants—a reminiscence of 1870. But German imagination cannot create what has never existed.

"Not a single corps of *francs-tireurs* has ever existed in Belgium.

"This is so certain that we do not hesitate most solemnly to defy the German Government to prove the existence of a single group of *francs-tireurs* either before or after the invasion of the territory.

"We have no knowledge even of an isolated case of civilians having fired on the troops, although there would be nothing to cause surprise in an individual misdeed of this kind. In several of our villages the population was exterminated because, said the German commanders, a major had been killed, or a young girl had attempted to kill an officer, &c. . . . In no single case was the supposed culprit discovered and named.

"According to the Memorandum, all statements concerning the martyrdoms, outrages and degrading treatment inflicted by the Germans are lies.

"The author of the Memorandum puts himself into a very difficult position by such wholesale denial. Historical truth has its rights. Far be it from us to exaggerate anything. We do not assert that all the troops who passed through our two provinces committed crimes; on several occasions the people have given to certain commanders and bodies of troops the praises due to their moderation and good behaviour; but, on the other hand, it is notorious and

* See below, p. 308.

indubitable that the German troops committed the various crimes denied by the Memorandum in Namur and Luxemburg.

"No less indubitable is it that they were committed, not here and there, by isolated individuals, but generally and systematically. For how can deeds perpetrated almost at every point on a front of nearly a hundred miles on the same days be considered isolated acts ?

"Acts of legitimate self-defence, repression of *francs-tireurs*, says the German Minister.

"We have answered this allegation above.

"Let us, however, accept for one moment, not by way of admission but of supposition, this hypothesis of a legitimate repression of *francs-tireurs*. We assert that an inquiry into every individual case of the destruction of a village and the extermination of civilians would show the punishment inflicted to be so greatly in excess of the alleged crime that it could not be justified by any kind of argument. This applies to the scenes of tragedy that took place at Andenne, Tamines, Dinant, Leffe, Neffe, Spontin, Surice, Ethe, Tintigny, Houdemont and many other places, scenes so atrocious that they will one day rouse the conscience of the whole world, and will be execrated by German justice itself when it has a true knowledge of them and has recovered its calm."

* * *

But had the German troops ever any idea of meting out reprisals in proportion to the gravity of offences ? The following declaration, by Herr Walther Bloem, who was attached for several months, and is perhaps still attached, to the Staff of the German Governor-General at Brussels, and even accompanied Baron von Bissing on a tour of inspection as adjutant, justifies us in answering this question in the negative.

"This principle" (that the community should suffer for the fault of an individual) writes Bloem in the *Kölnische Zeitung* of February 10th, 1915 (No. 146), "is fully justified by the theory of intimidation. The innocent must suffer with the guilty, or if the latter cannot be discovered the innocent must pay the penalty for the guilty, not because a crime has been committed, but to prevent the commission of crimes. The burning of a village, the execution of hostages, the decimation of the inhabitants of a commune which has taken up arms against the advancing troops are less acts of vengeance than signs of warning to districts not as yet occupied.

"And it is beyond doubt that the destruction by fire of Battice, Herve, Louvain and Dinant has acted as a warning.* The inevitable (*erzwungene*) devastation by fire, and bloodshed of the first days of the war in Belgium saved the large Belgian towns from the temptation to attack the weak garrisons which we had to leave behind us."

This is the apology of preventive repression when condemned by the modern conscience. Hence, if the Military Bureau of Inquiry at Berlin took so much trouble to determine the various points in the town of Louvain whence shots were fired, it was purely for effect ; the real object of the military authorities was not to inflict well-deserved punishment commensurate with their offences on the supposed *francs-tireurs* of Louvain, but to terrorise Brussels.

In many of the depositions inserted in the "White Book" we find a phrase which seems to constitute a rule of conduct laid down for the soldiers : marksmen seized with firearms in their hands are to be executed on the spot, and houses from which shots are fired are to be burnt. Now in the town of Louvain and the four communes adjoining it, 2,117 buildings suffered from the flames, whereas rather more than 200 inhabitants were put to death. How are we to explain the extraordinary disproportion between these two totals otherwise than by the preconceived intention of the German commanders, not to repress crime, but to strike terror throughout the country ? How, again, is it to be explained why in fighting which lasted, according to the German military authorities, from three to four days, the number of victims was not greater ?

The idea that there was no question at Louvain of a just chastisement for offences committed by the inhabitants of the town haunted German minds immediately after the events. This is very evident in the lines quoted below, which figure at the head of the first page of a pamphlet entitled : *Der Weltkrieg, 1914.—Achtes Bändchen.—Sturmnacht in Löwen.*† (*The World War in 1914.—Eighth Number.—A Stormy Night at Louvain*), published in the autumn of 1914, and written by Herr Robert Heymann : "The formidable drama that developed in the international struggle of the great war-year 1914 impresses us after the manner of an ancient rhapsody, an Iliad of modern days. Never were crime and punishment more closely related than here. This crime, however, did not really begin with the awful night of terror, nor, when we go more deeply into things, must it be laid solely to the charge of Louvain. All Belgium was guilty of a monstrous ignominy, an offence against all humanity, and so just chastisement fell upon the whole Belgian nation, represented by the inhabitants of Louvain."

Such declarations coming from German sources are in themselves full of significance ; they have a special importance, inasmuch as they corroborate in a very singular manner the statements of various Belgian witnesses, according to whom there is no doubt that certain Belgian towns

* This opinion seems to be shared by Baron F. W. von Bissing, son of the Governor-General of occupied Belgium, who, in a study on Belgium under German administration, records, without comment, the following words, which he claims to have heard repeated on several occasions in Brussels :—"The burning of Louvain saved us from a similar disaster, which would have caused even more terrible misery." (P. 75 of the April number [1915] of the *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*, Munich and Leipzig).

† Max Fischer's Verlagsbuchhandlung, Dresden, A. 16.

were marked out for destruction in advance, that is to say independently of any act of hostility committed by their inhabitants.*

* * *

The "White Book," so prolix in its accusations against the Belgian population, and so unconvincing in its attempts to give an air of probability to its accounts of the extraordinary events it records, offers no indication, even of an approximate kind, of the total number of the German victims of Belgian *francs-tireurs*, nor, indeed, of the number of Belgians massacred or deported to Germany as civilian prisoners. Even in the four Reports of the Military Bureau of Inquiry concerning the occurrences at Aerschot, Dinant, Louvain and Andenne, there are no totals given as to the supposed German victims; the Report relating to this last town admits, on the other hand, that about 200 citizens of Andenne lost their lives "in the course of the fighting" (p. 107), and that relating to Aerschot notes that 88 adult males were shot as *francs-tireurs* (p. 91). These figures are, in fact, lower than the actual ones, especially with regard to the massacres at Aerschot. The Report dealing with the "rising" at Louvain declares that the First Echelon of the Staff of the General-Kommando alone lost in killed, wounded, and missing on the evening of Tuesday, August 25th, 5 officers, 2 employés, 23 men and 95 horses; the number of dead is not specified (p. 234 and App. D 1). Meschede, a non-commissioned officer in the medical service (App. D 23), reports that at Louvain, in the evening of August 25th, he had to treat from 40 to 50 German wounded; he declared upon oath that two of these wounded had small-shot wounds in the head; as to the rest, Meschede does not say whether they received their wounds in the course of street fighting in the town, or in the battle that took place that day with the Belgian troops to the north of Louvain.† Staff-Surgeon Dr. Lange declares in the last sentence of his deposition (App. C 71) that when he handed over the ambulance installed in the villa of the barrister Adam at Dinant to the 2nd Company of the Army Medical Corps, the number of wounded German soldiers amounted to about 80. Although the first eleven lines of the deposition, which consists of eighteen, deal only with the supposed attacks made by the inhabitants, Dr. Lange does not say whether these soldiers had been wounded by the bullets of civilians or of the enemy's forces; nor does he say if the wounds were caused by small shot. A perfectly unbiassed study of the deposition does not allow us to conclude that the doctor omitted more precise details because the context left no room for doubt; in the last sentence but one, indeed, the wounded are again mentioned only in general terms. There is an ambiguity here which is increased by the odd fact that in this sworn statement the date of the incidents reported is not given; there is reason to believe, however, that they took place on August 23rd, 1914, the day on which there was a sharp encounter between the French troops established in force on the opposite bank of the Meuse and the German troops. Did the "White Book" deliberately create this ambiguity to the prejudice of the supposed *francs-tireurs*? With every wish to be impartial, it is impossible to reject this hypothesis altogether. At Andenne 100 men are said to have been injured by boiling water thrown upon them—a statement utterly devoid of truth (see pp. 107 and 110). Elsewhere throughout the "White Book" there are scarcely any but the vaguest data as to the number of the *francs-tireurs'* victims.

The dearth of information on this point is indeed one of the most striking of the impressions left on the mind after reading the "White Book," as is also this other, which is the direct result of the first: the disproportion between the offences, supposing these to have been committed, and their repression. Accurate figures in this connection would, however, have been calculated to impress those who are doubtful as to the legitimacy of the German reprisals.

* * *

Private Schmidt reports (App. D 47) that at a given moment on August 25th at Louvain, the fusillade had all the intensity of controlled fire; although he was exposed to five successive fusillades in the streets he was not hit himself, nor does he mention that any of his comrades were. In his excursions through the town, Schmidt put his foot on the grating of a cellar, which gave way under his weight; he broke his wrist as he fell into the cellar, from the back of which someone fired at him. For the sixth time he escaped from the bullets. He was pulled out of the cellar, but two other soldiers who fell in at the same time did not succeed in getting out. Schmidt heard next morning that they were seriously wounded, but in his deposition he does not state if their wounds were due to their fall or to the bullets of the *francs-tireurs*. As he was leaving Louvain on August 26th, this soldier was once more exposed to fire directed against a Red Cross train, which, however, was ineffectual.

Mention is made in the "White Book" of violent controlled fire (App. D 3, 9 and 47), of frantic firing (App. A 5), of disorderly firing (*wüste Schiesserei*, App. D 41), of terrible fire (App. D 9), of furious fire (App. B 1 and p. 234), of murderous fire (App. D 9), of colossal fire (App. D 3); "from every height," we are told, "lightnings flashed" (p. 117);

* See more especially in connection with Louvain Part II, Chapter V, Section III, Documents 24, 25, 26, 27 and 29; in connection with Dinant the report of M. Tschoffen, Public Prosecutor, Part II, Chapter IV, Section I, and the Note of Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur, Part III. (Appendix), Document IX; in connection with Andenne, the Note of Monseigneur Heylen, *ibid*.

† See again "White Book," App. D 6, and also p. 237 of the present volume.

passing through one of the streets of Louvain with ten men, Colonel Schweder was under "a continuous hail of bullets" for about 500 yards (App. D 7); "the conduct of the inhabitants of Andenne degenerated into unparalleled devilry" (*Teufelei*), says the Report of the Military Bureau on this town (p. 107).^{*} Yet the German soldiers always come out unscathed, or very nearly so, from their perilous situation. In this connection, Major Schlick's description of a furious encounter with *francs-tireurs* is typical (App. C 44). In spite of the emphatic terms used to give vigour to the story, it does not appear that any soldiers were injured by the fire of the inhabitants; at any rate, the officer mentions no casualties among his men (see p. 221).

Several witnesses seem to have felt it necessary to explain the very limited number of German victims; some say that the inhabitants fired much too high (App. D 8 and 10); another, Baron von Langermann und Erlencamp, states: "By a miracle our losses were very small; the *francs-tireurs* were very bad shots" (App. B 1). Yet another declares that fortunately the pitch thrown down upon the German soldiers from the houses was not hot enough to inflict serious burns (App. D 29). They might have added that the *francs-tireurs* were really very artless to hope for more brilliant results from the use of shot-guns. But it is difficult to see how machine guns (pp. 107, 122, 234; App. 25; App. B 3, C 2, D 2, 29, 37, 38, 40, 42, 46, 49), bombs and hand-grenades (pp. 107, 111; App. D 36, 37, p. 300, and 49) can have been so harmless. The civilians so scrupulously respected by the German troops while they were preparing their insidious attacks, were at leisure to choose the most propitious moment for their aggression. The only real explanation is that such material was never in the possession of the inhabitants, as may be inferred from certain reticences in the "White Book" itself; in this there is no mention of the discovery of machine guns anywhere but in a corner house at Dinant,† in the course of perquisitions made there. On the other hand, the Germans themselves brought machine guns into action in the streets of Louvain and Andenne, hence no doubt the mistake made by the soldiers. The Belgian civilians never possessed any; as to the bombs and hand-grenades, the Belgian field army itself had none at its disposal in 1914. How, then, could the civil population have had any in August of that year.

* * *

Be this as it may, the futility of the means of resistance employed by the *francs-tireurs* does not seem to have mitigated the fury of the soldiers: they entered the houses, striking down or driving out the inhabitants, and the terrible *francs-tireurs* allowed themselves to be led like sheep to the slaughter! Although they knew they were doomed in any case, none of them seem to have thought of selling their lives as dearly as possible when they were arrested. Sergeant Stiebing (App. C 31), who with some of his comrades stormed from eight to ten houses at Dinant from which it was alleged shots had been fired, himself admits this: "As soon as we entered the room," he declares, "the men threw down their weapons and held up their hands." We search the "White Book" almost in vain for accounts of hand-to-hand encounters with the *francs-tireurs* or struggles in the houses. There are, however, a few such, as, for instance, in App. D 2, 29 and 39, and C 26. The narrative on p. 159 (App. C 26) appears, moreover, to be highly imaginative. According to Captain Wilke, who records it, a sergeant and a soldier, entering a house at Dinant, found themselves face to face with seven civilians, armed with a pistol and six shot-guns. The seven were all shot or stunned with blows in the twinkling of an eye; one of these doughty champions threatened the two Germans with his pistol on the ground-floor; the other six, who were on the first floor, seem to have offered no resistance whatever. And thus the soldiers got off quite uninjured.‡ Just as they were about to leave the house five other men, armed with guns, coming no one knows whence, and not, it would seem, at all intimidated by the firing that had just taken place, stood before them; the Germans overcame these also, but this time only with the help of comrades from outside. The improbability of this story suggests grave doubts as to its truth. There is no doubt that the two soldiers sought to increase their own importance by boasting of their amazing exploits. In any case, it would have been wiser to interrogate the soldier himself (the sergeant was killed in France) than to trust to the recollections of an officer, whose report was drawn up six months after the occurrence.

* * *

The fact is that in no part of Belgium, whether occupied or not as yet by the German troops, were there any bands of *francs-tireurs* or any attempts at armed resistance on the part of the civilian population. No one will deny that there may have been isolated acts of hostility; there have been such in every war and in every country. But it cannot be too strongly insisted upon that up to the present not a single instance of armed resistance on the part of the civil population has been established before the Belgian Commission of Inquiry. The Commission

^{*} These passages are noted merely as examples; there are a great many similar ones in the "White Book."

[†] This town had been put into a state of defence by the French troops, and it would seem to have been they who installed the machine-guns found, according to the "White Book," in the corner house (App. C 2).

[‡] Or so we may infer from the silence of the "White Book."

has, however, paid special attention to this point, as to which most of the witnesses were closely questioned. The invariable answer was: "No one belonging to us fired; all weapons had been deposited in the Town Hall." Many of the witnesses added: "We were far too much frightened." One witness only stated he had heard from a third person that a revolver had been fired from the house of an inhabitant of Aerschot. This witness was not able to say whether the shot had been fired by a civilian, and the truth of the incident has not been established.*

It might have been supposed that some of the inhabitants, exasperated by the deeds of violence—murder, arson and pillage—committed before their eyes, and wounded perhaps in their affections, would have taken vengeance here and there by firing upon the invaders; but not a single witness has made any sort of allusion to such an act.

It is alleged in the Prefatory Note of the "White Book" (p. 2), in the Report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry into occurrences at Dinant (p. 122) and also in numerous appendices, that German soldiers were wounded by small shot (*Schroten*). The conclusion drawn from this is that those who fired were civilians. There is every reason to suppose, without fear of error, that many Germans, misled by their own prepossessions, attributed certain wounds to shot-guns, perhaps honestly, but without serious, and above all, expert examination, when the injuries in question were of a very different origin. With many of them we know the idea that they were being attacked by *francs-tireurs* whenever they could not see their assailants amounted to an obsession. It is a fact that certain German doctors declare they attended men who had been wounded by shot; these surgeons were Dr. Berghausen (App. D 9), Dr. Keuten (App. D 21), Dr. Sorge (App. C 55), and Dr. Haupt (indirect evidence reported by a patient) (App. C 72). As to Dr. Köckeritz (App. C 67), he merely says that he *saw* inhabitants of Dinant firing with shot-guns. It is extraordinary and indeed inconceivable that these doctors should not have made a formal statement as to the results of their investigations, that they should never have associated foreign or Belgian colleagues† with themselves when extracting suspicious projectiles, or that at least they should not have invited a single one of these to note the facts. And this though the confirmation of a witness whose evidence could not have been suspected of partiality would have been of inestimable value! In the absence of any sworn statement the tardy and summary declaration of a few doctors who merely allege that they attended or saw a very limited number of men with small-shot wounds‡ is really a very insufficient basis for the *general* accusation brought against the Belgian civil population; still less can it be made the justification, more or less, of the atrocious massacres which took place in Belgium. At Dinant, according to Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur, certain civilians were riddled with small shot, as the German doctors themselves noted; this shot had been fired by German soldiers. There is nothing surprising in this when we remember that the Germans as soon as they entered the town took possession of the sporting weapons handed over by private persons to the communal authorities, and divided the more costly of these between them (see p. 338). The same thing happened in many other places. It is important to remark further that Dr. Lange, who attended a large number of wounded at Dinant, makes no mention of any wounds caused by small shot (App. C 71). The same may be said of Doctors Rehm (App. 4), Kaiser (App. 32), Esche (App. 33), Beyer (App. 62), Petrenz (App. C 51), Holey (App. C 74), and Marx (App. C 87)

* * *

The representatives of the forty-four Powers who met at the Hague in 1907, recognising the imperfection of their work in advance, thought it well to declare in the preamble of the Fourth Convention (concerning the laws and usages of war on land) that "in cases not covered by the Regulations adopted by the Powers, populations and belligerents are to remain under the safeguard and governance of the principles of international law as evinced in the usages established between civilised nations, the laws of humanity, and the requirements of the public conscience." They added that *Articles 1 and 2 of these Regulations more especially are to be interpreted in this sense*. This is equivalent to saying that failure strictly to observe the rules laid down notably in Articles 1 and 2 ought not to be made the pretext for merciless repression; it is a plea to the commanders of an army to have pity on those whose patriotism may have led them astray.|| This recommendation should have appealed with special force to Germany, one of the guarantors of Belgian neutrality, whose brutal aggression was from this very fact calculated to provoke extreme indignation among the inhabitants of the invaded country.

* See p. 114.

† The deposition of Dr. Lemaire, one of the only two Belgians whose evidence figures in the "White Book," does not deal with the subject in question here (App. D 31).

‡ Dr. Berghausen saw or attended four, Dr. Keuten two, Dr. Sorge several, Dr. Haupt one. The non-commissioned certificated medical officer, Meschede (App. D 23), for his part, declares upon oath that he had two soldiers suffering from small-shot wounds under his care at the railway station of Louvain on August 25th. It is, indeed, by no means impossible that the wounded referred to by Drs. Berghausen and Keuten, and the non-commissioned officer Meschede, may be partly identical; this seems to be the case notably as to two of those spoken of by Berghausen and soldiers treated by Keuten.

|| The insertion in the preamble to the Fourth Convention of the declarations cited above was even made a condition of their adhesion to the Convention by several Powers, as they held that the appended regulations did not afford adequate protection to the civil population.

But far from deferring to the view expressed by the representatives of the Powers, the Germans applied to Belgium methods inspired by ideas directly opposed to it. Did not a semi-official German message concerning the burning of Louvain, transmitted by wireless telegraphy on August 27th, 1914, declare: "The only means of *preventing* surprise attacks from the civil population has been to interfere with unrelenting severity and to create examples which by their *frightfulness* should be a warning to the whole country."*

We are entitled to conclude from the foregoing that even if the German theory were established it would nevertheless be evident that in the conduct of the war in Belgium the German army did not observe the rules adopted and the tendencies indicated by the qualified representatives of the whole civilised world.

How, moreover, when repression follows upon the offence instantly and without inquiry, is it possible to distinguish equitably between acts of hostility properly so-called and acts of legitimate defence? If, in exceptional cases, inhabitants had sought to defend their persons, and the life or honour of members of their family, such acts would not have justified measures of repression. What conclusion can an impartial mind form, for instance, after reading the deposition of the private soldier Vorwieger, which figures among those invoked by the Imperial Government to justify the massacres and arson at Dinant? (App. C 61). "During the ~~street~~ fighting at Dinant on August 21st," declares the witness, "I saw in a house I was just about to enter, a woman of about thirty standing there revolver in hand, ready to fire." The deposition, so far as it bears upon this incident, stops short here; the soldier does not say that the woman used her weapon.

* * *

Finally, the "White Book," the 328 large pages of which constitute one long panegyric of what is asserted to be the admirable behaviour of the German troops in Belgium, and contain neither a word of blame nor even the smallest reservation of any kind in connection with them, appears entirely ignorant of various categories of crime which inevitably occur in armies in the field. Nevertheless a great many witnesses who gave evidence before the Belgian Commission declare that the cases of drunkenness so frequent among the German officers and soldiers were the cause of mistakes fatal to the population. To these cases of drunkenness, further attested by a large number of diaries taken from the persons of German prisoners, the "White Book" makes not a *single allusion*. The task even of explaining or excusing them no doubt seemed beyond the powers of the compilers. Witnesses have spoken of the brawls which took place between soldiers, drunk or sober, in the course of which shots were exchanged; these shots were nearly always imputed to the inhabitants. It is also notorious that in the German army various acts of vengeance were perpetrated by private soldiers on their officers; it is so easy after such an act for the guilty soldier to exclaim: "*Man hat geschossen!*" (Somebody fired!). The firing in these cases was generally ascribed to civilians, whereas, when under exceptional circumstances a post-mortem examination took place, the German origin of the bullets was established. Finally it is inevitable that in huge armies composed for the most part of men long unaccustomed to handling arms, there should be occasionally accidental discharges of fire-arms. Given the morbid and systematically fostered obsession of the *franc-tireur* which obtained in the German ranks, and the extraordinary nervous excitement noted by many witnesses, it cannot be doubted that in many cases the soldiers honestly attributed shots that were fired to the inhabitants.

Numerous cases of this kind are in fact recorded in the note-books taken from German dead and wounded. The writers of these notes, some cynical, others making no attempt to conceal the shame they felt at the conduct of some of their compatriots, express themselves sincerely. The note-books are consequently more valuable as documentary evidence than the reports and depositions of the "White Book," in which officers and soldiers, the prescribers or the executors of massacre, and the beneficiaries of rapine, indulge in mutual adulation of a kind that passes all bounds. Major von Klewitz, of the Staff, IXth Reserve Corps, who arrived at Louvain on August 25th, concludes his deposition with this pronouncement: "The conduct of the troops at Louvain has been exemplary" (App. D 2). The "White Book" neither mentions nor alludes to these military note-books, though many of them had been published before May, 1915.

Moreover, it was not enough that the "White Book" should have refrained from expressing the slightest blame in the form of regret or apology on the subject of the behaviour in any circumstances of any one of the German officers or men.† It was not enough that the "White Book" should have declared the accusations of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry against the German army to be nothing but base calumnies (p. 6). After the most unscrupulous attempts to dishonour the Belgian people as a whole and practically without exception in the eyes of the world, by representing them as actuated by the most bestial instincts and the vilest sentiments, the "White Book" does not hesitate to vaunt the self-sacrificing spirit of the German soldiers in their dealings with those in danger, and with the sick, "in spite of the fact that their patience

* See *Times*, August 29th, 1914.

† At the end of the general report on events at Dinant, the Military Bureau of Inquiry at Berlin declares that it is no doubt regrettable that the town should have been destroyed for the most part, and that many lives should have been sacrificed; but it entirely approves the action of the German troops who were forced to have recourse to reprisals necessitated by the military objective in view (*Kriegszweck*) (p. 124).

was severely tried by the treacherous attacks directed against them." Old men, women and children were, we are assured, very generally spared, even when under the gravest suspicion (p. 5)—but the "White Book" gives no explanation of the massacre of old men, women and children in considerable numbers throughout the country, and notably at Dinant.*

True, the Belgian Government, in spite of its legitimate grounds of complaint, is ready to admit that certain German corps behaved correctly and humanely, but it maintains that others, acting under orders from their commanders—and thus involving the responsibility of the higher command—conducted themselves like hordes of savages! The term is harsh, but it does not exaggerate the facts. As to the instances of humanity recorded in the "White Book," they by no means invalidate the accounts of the innumerable atrocities denounced in the reports of the English and Belgian Commissions of Inquiry.

The "White Book" further affirms that the German troops strove with the utmost devotion to combat the flames at Louvain, and that it is thanks to them that only a "comparatively small" portion of the town, namely, the quarter between the railway station and the Grand' Place, suffered from the fire; finally, it was thanks to them that "the admirable Hôtel de Ville" was saved (pp. 235, 236). The truth is that the finest quarters of the town of Louvain were deliberately set on fire;† in certain streets two or three houses were intentionally spared. Finally, the soldiers would not have been called upon to show their devotion by "saving" the Hôtel de Ville from burning had they not prevented the work of zealous citizens who were trying to extinguish the flames of the adjoining houses. The preservation of the building was, moreover, mainly due to favourable atmospheric conditions.

Installed as the master of Belgium, the German Government disposes as it thinks fit of the life and property of defenceless Belgian citizens. The case is different where the nationals of neutral countries are in question. Thus, on the occasion of the murder of five Spanish subjects, the German Government was itself obliged to furnish a material proof of the reality of the excesses committed by its troops upon the civil population. It was, indeed, compelled to pay indemnities amounting to 182,000 marks for the death of these five Spaniards, shot without any reason, together with other inhabitants of the town, at Liège, on August 21st, 1914. After thus recognising the claims of the families of these five victims, can the German Government be allowed to assert that its troops did not go beyond their rights in this execution, and that in no case did they commit any excesses in Belgium? It is hardly necessary to say that none of the families of other victims shot on August 21st have received any indemnity so far.

* * *

Whenever the German Government ventures to insist upon the humane sentiments which govern the Imperial troops, it is allowable to refer it to the publication, already mentioned several times, of the Historical Section of the Great General Staff of the German Army on the subject of the *Usages of War on Land*. This publication expressly puts the officer on his guard against "the tendency of thought in the last century . . . dominated essentially by humanitarian considerations, which not infrequently degenerated into sentimentality and flabby emotion" (*Sentimentalität und weiche Gefühlschwärmerei*) (p. 3; Engl. ed., p. 54). "By steeping himself in military history," says the Introduction itself, as if to emphasise the character of the work, "an officer will be able to guard himself against excessive humanitarian notions; it will teach him that certain severities are indispensable to war, nay, more, that the only true humanity very often lies in a ruthless application of them" (p. 3; Engl. ed., p. 55).

General von Bissing himself, in a proclamation made in Germany in the month of August, 1914, when he was commanding the VIIth Army Corps, and had not yet been appointed Governor-General of occupied Belgium, expressed himself as follows: "It is no doubt to be regretted that in repressing these infamous acts [*i.e.*, the acts of hostility committed by the civil population] isolated houses as well as flourishing villages and even entire towns should be annihilated, but this should not provoke misplaced sentimentality. All that we may destroy is, in our eyes, less in value than the life of a single one of our soldiers. That is self-evident, and indeed, properly speaking, it is not necessary to mention it." He further lays down this axiom: "In such a case the innocent will have to suffer with the guilty." (*Kölnische Volkszeitung*, September 17th, 1914, *Wochen-Ausgabe*, No. 33.) This savage theory is directly opposed to Article 50 of the Regulations drawn up at the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907, which Germany pledged herself to adopt in the instructions to be given to her troops. This Article 50, which is never mentioned in the Manual of the Great General Staff‡ of 1902, is

* The explanation given on p. 123, para. 3, of the "White Book" as to the death of women and children at Dinant, though in part admissible, itself condemns the conduct of the German troops. Among the 606 identified victims killed in this town of 7,700 inhabitants were 71 females, 39 boys and girls under the age of sixteen, and 34 persons of both sexes over seventy years old.

† See also pp. 28 and 231-2 of the present volume.

‡ The manual indeed expressly authorises war levies as a means of punishment (p. 63; Eng. ed., p. 136). In January, 1916, a spy in German pay having been found killed at Schaerbeek, the whole community of Brussels was punished with a fine of 500,000 francs, in addition to a fine of 50,000 francs inflicted on the commune of Schaerbeek. After a formal protest from the communal authorities of Brussels, the Governor-General von Bissing, though he upheld the fine, deferred collection of the same.

in these terms : " No collective penalty, pecuniary or otherwise, may be inflicted on populations by reason of individual acts for which they cannot be considered responsible as a body."

The first Governor-General of occupied Belgium, Field-Marshal von der Goltz, showed no less contempt than his successor for the principle proclaimed in this article. Two proclamations posted at Brussels and reproduced below will show under what conditions and as a result of what acts " reprisals " may be legitimately resorted to, according to this high functionary, and also how unscrupulously German Commanders of the highest rank set at nought engagements solemnly entered into by the German Empire.

The first of these proclamations reads as follows :—

" It has happened lately in districts not at present occupied by more or less strong bodies of German troops, that convoys of wagons and patrols have been attacked by surprise by the inhabitants.

" I draw the attention of the public to the fact that a register is kept of the towns and localities in the neighbourhood of which such attacks have taken place, and that they may expect their punishment as soon as the German troops pass near them.

" Brussels, September 25th, 1914.

" *The Governor-General of Belgium,*

" *Baron VON DER GOLTZ, Field-Marshal.*"

The second proclamation is in these terms :—

" In the evening of September 25th the railway line and the telegraph wires were destroyed between Lovenjoul and Vertryck. In consequence of this the two places above-named had to render account for the same, and to give hostages.

" In future, places nearest to the spot where such occurrences take place will be punished without mercy, whether guilty or not. To this end hostages have been taken from all places adjacent to railways open to such attacks, and at the first attempt to destroy the railways or the telegraph or telephone lines they will at once be shot.

" Further, all soldiers guarding railway lines have received orders to shoot any person approaching them or the telegraph and telephone communications in a suspicious manner.

" Brussels, October 1st, 1914.

" *The Governor-General of Belgium,*

" *Baron VON DER GOLTZ, Field-Marshal.*"

It is by no means established that the attacks mentioned in the first notice were committed by the civil population ; as to the destruction of the railway line between Lovenjoul and Vertryck, it was carried out by a cyclist detachment of the Belgian Army, which came from Antwerp on September 22nd, 1914. Under the leadership of Captain Delfosse, this detachment reached the line at the confines of the communes of Lovenjoul and Vertryck. They placed two explosive bombs on the rails. A train that passed shortly afterwards caused these to explode. The destruction of the line was accomplished by Belgian soldiers in military uniform. No civilian took part in it (see pp. 105-6).

* * *

The taking of hostages, though not expressly forbidden by the Hague Conventions, is very repugnant to the modern conscience ; it was generally believed that in future wars between civilised nations the custom would not be revived. *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*, however, did not consider it possible to refrain altogether from this barbarous practice. " We must therefore," it says, " disregard the unfavourable criticism of this method of war, which has been employed for various reasons, in exceptional cases, by the German Army " (p. 49). A little further on, referring to the leading citizens compelled by the Germans to travel on railway engines in 1870-71, the Manual makes an obvious effort to excuse this measure, which it stigmatises itself as harsh and cruel. As a fact, the taking of hostages was comparatively exceptional in the course of the last war. The case was very different in 1914 ; never in the past was the taking of hostages so systematically and generally practised. As soon as the German troops entered Belgium, hostages were taken everywhere, even in places where no disturbing incident had taken place. The system was continued for many long months in numerous localities, even in districts outside the region of military operations and camps ; only the capital of the kingdom escaped almost entirely, no doubt because of the notoriety which would have attended such measures. The Burgomaster of Aerschot, M. Tielemans, was shot on August 20th, 1914, after the alleged insurrection of the population of that town. The Burgomaster of Andenne, Dr. Camus, who had been taken as a hostage, and subsequently released, was shot on August 21st. Many hostages were executed at Dinant on August 23rd.

This last act, which throws a terrible light on the mentality of the German military chiefs, is " justified " as follows in the Report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry at Berlin as to the occurrences at Dinant :—

" It is essential to bear in mind, in appreciating the behaviour of the troops of the XIIth Corps in connection with the extremely hostile conduct of the civil population who had recourse to the most reprehensible proceedings, that the tactical objective of the Corps was to cross the Meuse rapidly, and drive back the enemy from the left side of the river. It was a *necessity of war* (*Kriegsnotwendigkeit*) to put a speedy end to the resistance of the inhabitants who opposed this aim, and this had to be done, no matter how. From this point of view the troops were justified

in ordering an artillery bombardment of the town, which was taking an active part in the fighting, and in *setting fire* to the houses occupied by the *francs-tireurs*, as well as in *shooting the inhabitants who were caught with arms in their hands*.

"The shooting of hostages which took place in various quarters was also perfectly lawful. The troops who were fighting inside the town were in a situation of extreme peril, seeing that while under the fire of the artillery, machine guns, and infantry of the regular troops on the left bank of the Meuse, they were also exposed to attack from the inhabitants in their rear and on their flanks. Hostages were taken in order to put an end to these operations of the *francs-tireurs* (*Franktireurwesen*). As in spite of everything the population continued to inflict losses on the combatant forces, the German authorities proceeded to execute the hostages. Failing this, the taking of hostages would have been nothing but an empty threat. Their execution was the more justifiable, as, in view of the general participation of the population in the fighting, they can hardly have been innocent persons. The measure was inevitable, taking into account the military objective (*Kriegszweck*), and the dangerous position of the troops who were treacherously attacked from behind" (p. 123).

Thus everything becomes lawful for the German troops at once in virtue of the *franc-tireur* hypothesis, and in virtue of *military necessity*, which is always subjectively estimated by the military authorities themselves, who subsequently invoke it—to justify their acts. Execution without previous inquiry, even of hostages, is a lawful act, as soon as there is an important military objective to achieve; from that moment the most sacred rights are non-existent.

What were actually the circumstances which preceded the shooting of the hostages at Dinant on August 23rd, 1914? M. Tschoffen, the Public Prosecutor of that town, relates them as follows (see the 20th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry):—

"The troops, coming down by the Froidvau road, occupied the Penant quarter. The inhabitants were arrested as soon as the Germans arrived, and kept under observation near Rocher-Bayard. As the French fire had slackened the Germans began building a bridge. Occasional bullets still annoyed them, however. As these were very intermittent, the Germans concluded—honestly or not—that they were fired by *francs-tireurs*. They sent M. Bourdon, deputy clerk to the magistrates, over to the left bank, to announce that if the fire continued the civilian prisoners would be executed. He carried out his mission, and then, recrossing the river, gave himself up again, declaring to the Germans that he had ascertained that only French soldiers were firing. A few more French bullets arrived, and then something so monstrous happened that the imagination could not conceive it, did not eye-witnesses survive to attest it, and did not corpses with gaping wounds furnish the most irrefutable of proofs: the band of prisoners, men, women and children, were driven in front of a wall and shot!

"Eighty victims fell on this occasion!"

Among them were M. Bourdon, his wife, his daughter, and one of his sons.

An appeal to *Kriegsnotwendigkeit* allows German morality to treat the primordial laws of humanity as it treats solemnly concluded treaties; they are of no more account than scraps of paper when they interfere with the interests of the German army.

In the case of the Burgomaster of Aerschot, an important military objective, such as that invoked to justify the massacre of the Dinant hostages, did not even exist. But what of that? Under the domination of a mentality which defies the national ideal* and a mad presumption, which at the beginning of the war really seemed in certain respects to have deprived the German army of all sense of reality, it was inevitable that scruples should have little weight. The dangerous aphorism "*Krieg ist Krieg*" (war is war), so often proclaimed by officers and soldiers, is always present in their minds to cut short hesitations and stifle the voice of conscience.

When all scruples as to the objective certainty of crimes and the individual responsibility for offences are thus eliminated from the consciences of military leaders, there are no longer any guarantees of humane conduct on the part of armies in the field. Is it not idle to claim justice from minds so distorted, which seem to have lost all sense of equity when their own people are not in question?

Moreover, *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege* in its Introduction proclaims the fact: "A war conducted with energy cannot be directed merely against the combatants of the enemy State

* In a work published in the autumn of 1914 by Köhler, at Minden, in Westphalia, and entitled, *Die Eroberung Belgiens, 1914, Selbsterlebtes* (*The Conquest of Belgium, 1914, Personal Experiences*), the author, Major Victor von Strantz, puts into the mouth of a young officer the following declarations, which may be taken to express the mentality which obtained, at least in certain sections of the German army, at the beginning of the war. In answer to a Belgian peasant woman who had come to murder him as he slept, the officer exclaims, after showing how the peaceful German nation, treacherously attacked (*aus dem Hinterhalt*), had suddenly become the most martial of all peoples: "And then you come, you, a small State, who had the audacity to bar the way, you, to whom we had promised peace and protection if you would not hamper us in our great work, and you make common cause with our enemies. It is as if you were to attack a priest bearing the Holy Eucharist. We are sanctified by the greatness of our destiny; we are, each one of us, bearers of the Holy Eucharist, guardians and protectors of our Fatherland, our women and our homes" (p. 34). The author, a few lines further back, had made the officer say to the peasant that she talked like a schoolgirl!

and its defensive measures, but it will and must in like manner seek to destroy the total moral and material resources of the latter. Humanitarian claims, such as the protection of life and property, can only be taken into consideration in so far as the nature and object of the war permit."

Thus are massacres of innocent civilians, on the ground that someone in the locality fired or is suspected of having fired, explained and justified! A certain number of persons are seized indiscriminately and shot in cold blood; for the interest of the German army—which sanctifies everything—demands that an example should be made, and that there should be executions without inquiry or sentence. Although it is silent as to a good many occurrences of this nature, and makes no allusion, for instance, to the massacre of over 400 civilians at Tamines, the "White Book" itself enables us to reconstitute some of these dramas. Such deeds, for which no precedents are to be found in modern history, are not acts of war, but murders.

* * *

What are we to think of a means of conducting war which consists in arresting thousands of civilians and interning them for months as a preventive measure? Among those deported was the valiant M. Max, the Burgomaster of Brussels, who was imprisoned in a cell in the fortress of Glatz.* A number of Belgians who were carried off to Germany under these circumstances were only set at liberty on condition of signing a declaration acknowledging that they had been justly arrested, as German troops had been fired upon in their commune. Several hundreds of the inhabitants of Louvain and the surrounding villages, both male and female, of all ages and classes, were taken to Cologne on August 28th, 1914, in a truly inhuman fashion. The interminable journey was made in cattle-trucks, and the prisoners were almost without food the whole time. At Cologne, where they spent only one night, as well as in the stations on the way, they were insulted by the crowd, which looked upon them as criminals, the accomplices of those who, as the Germans believed, had treacherously murdered German soldiers; they were afterwards sent back to Belgium. The transport of these hundreds of the inhabitants of Louvain to Cologne and their immediate return to Belgium bear witness to the state of disquiet that reigned at the time in the higher spheres of the German command; though it is also possible that the unhappy prisoners were deliberately exhibited in order to strengthen in the minds of the German people belief in the legend of the Belgian *francs-tireurs*, which was so necessary to give some semblance of justification for the massacres and arson committed by the invading troops.

Lamentable as was the fate of these few hundreds of Louvain citizens, we must esteem them fortunate when we think of the treatment inflicted on many thousands of other Belgian civilians sent to Germany under conditions no less ignominious, insulted by the population on the way, and kept in prison for many long months. At present, more than a year and a half after the outbreak of war, several thousands of Belgian civilians are still in captivity in the heart of Germany.† According to estimates which may be considered fairly accurate, from 13,000 to 14,000 Belgian civilians have been sent as prisoners to Germany; about October 1st, 1915, 3,000 of them had been sent back to their homes. Thus at this date from 10,000 to 11,000 still remained in Germany in prisons or internment camps. Article 4 of the Hague Regulations declares that prisoners of war must be treated with humanity; the representatives of the Powers did not even think it necessary to ensure special protection for civil prisoners (see *inter alia* pp. 265-6 of this volume as to the treatment to which these prisoners are subjected).

* * *

In conclusion, we may ask whether any monuments of the past would still exist if throughout the centuries advancing troops had brandished incendiary torches in the towns on their line of march, and had practised the methods considered legitimate by the Germany of to-day, that Germany, whose army, unlike the mercenary hordes of the past, contains in its ranks the intellectual and scientific *élite* of the nation?

The American writer Powell describes the organisation of the incendiary service of the German army as follows:—

"The Germans went about the work of house-burning as systematically as they did everything else. They had various devices for starting conflagrations, all of them effective. At Aerschot and Louvain they broke the windows of the houses and threw in sticks which had been soaked in oil and dipped in sulphur. Elsewhere they used tiny black tablets, about the size of cough-lozenges, made of some highly inflammable composition, to which they touched a match. At Termonde, which they destroyed in spite of the fact that the inhabitants had evacuated the city before their arrival, they used a motor-car equipped with a large tank for petrol, a pump,

* Arrested on September 26th, 1914, M. Max was transferred at the end of 1915 from Glatz (Silesia) to Celle (Hanover), where officer prisoners are interned.

† General von Boehn says (App. D 1) that to guard against the enterprises of the *francs-tireurs* it became necessary to deport the entire population of the environs of Louvain, "and this by sending them as far as possible as prisoners to Germany. For, as Antwerp is not entirely isolated, these people could always reappear on the scenes, and would do so with the courage of despair. To evacuate them in the direction of Antwerp would not, therefore, meet the exigencies of the situation." Even admitting that such an argument may have had some value at the time when it was put forward, in September, 1914, it is quite certain that it can no longer be considered valid.

a hose, and a spraying-nozzle. The car was run slowly through the streets, one soldier working the pump and another spraying the fronts of the houses. Then they set fire to them. Oh, yes, they were very methodical about it all, those Germans."

A report of the Belgian military authorities, dated September 19th, 1914, contains this passage on the subject of the burning of the town of Termonde: "A company was directed to carry out the destruction of the houses. This company kept central reservoirs, where each man, carrying a pneumatic belt, went to replenish himself with an incendiary liquid with which to sprinkle the wood on the outside of the houses; another man, wearing a glove especially provided with a preparation of phosphorus, passed in front of the houses which had been sprinkled and rubbed his glove on the wood. This set fire to the houses and permitted a whole street to be burnt in a quarter of an hour. In order to expedite still further the burning of the houses, the men threw inside inflammable matter, of which I send you a sample."

M. G. de Rudder, chemist, first-class, formulates his analysis of the incendiary tablets in the following terms:—

"These tablets are black in colour with a metallic surface; they are shiny, greasy to the touch, elastic and odourless. When rubbed on paper they leave a black mark.

"They have a diameter of 20.5 millimetres, a thickness of 2.9 millimetres, and show in the centre a circular aperture of 4.2 millimetres. They weigh 1.43 grammes. Examined under a magnifying glass, they show a slight trace of parallel lines going in the same direction on either side; which seems to indicate that they had been subjected to mechanical rolling.

"When cut in transverse sections it is seen that they are black only on the surface, and that they are composed of a substance of a horny nature, of a yellowish colour, and transparent.

"When lighted they quickly burst into flame and produce a deflagration; the flame is of a yellowish colour.

"A chemical examination shows that they are composed of nitro-cellulose.

"*Conclusions.*—These tablets are made with nitro-cellulose, gelatinised with a view to enabling them to be submitted to the process of rolling, and afterwards cut by a machine.

"Their surface is covered with blacklead with a view to lessening the electric properties of the nitro-cellulose and facilitating their manipulation.

"It is possible that the central aperture of these tablets is designed to enable a number to be joined together by means of a wick intended to be ignited before they are thrown on to the spot where the fire is to be produced."

These incendiary tablets have been found in Belgium by the thousand; the "White Book," however, makes not the slightest allusion to these engines of destruction, nor to any of the incendiary appliances with which the German army was provided, doubtless because their existence reveals the premeditated nature of the work of destruction. Rather it does its utmost to suggest that when the troops were obliged to fire the houses, they made use of any materials that came to hand. Thus Captain von Esmarch relates (App. D 46) that at Louvain he saw soldiers setting fire to a number of houses by throwing burning petroleum lamps into them and setting fire to the gas escaping from the pipes, the burners having been broken off previously, also feeding the flames with curtains and bedding; he also saw them using benzine here and there. The orders to begin this burning came from Colonel von Stubenrauch, commanding officer of the munitions columns; there seems, moreover, no reason to doubt the good faith of Von Esmarch's narrative. Captain Karge also reports (App. A 3) that he used oil of turpentine, which he found in a tin on the spot, to set fire to a house at Aerschot (App. C 3).*

Violence of every kind, pillage and theft, naturally followed in the train of murder and arson, when once free course was allowed to brutal instincts and passions. In certain places pillage, expressly forbidden by Articles 28 and 47 of the Hague Regulations, became general; but certain houses bore the inscription in chalk: *Nicht plündern* (not to be plundered). In other places, as, for instance, at Louvain, there were printed notices warning the frenzied soldiers not to enter the houses and plunder them *without the permission of the Kommandantur*. This prohibition is in itself an avowal. According to information received by the Belgian Government, 15,000 houses were pillaged in the province of Brabant alone.

This plundering is attested not only by the evidence of witnesses before the Belgian and English Commissions of Inquiry, but also by a large number of pocket-diaries found on German soldiers. To these facts, the truth of which it is impossible to impugn, the "White Book" makes only one allusion; this refers to the plundering at Louvain. The statement in the 5th Report of the Belgian Committee of Inquiry that a large part of the booty, packed into military wagons, was afterwards transported by train to Germany, is a pure invention, says the Berlin Military Bureau (p. 237). "It is the military authorities," it adds, "which decide what is to be despatched by wagons and by rail, and they never made any arrangements of the kind in question." We can easily believe this!

Women were outraged in many places; even nuns fell victims to the bestiality of the German soldiers. Although we have no desire to dwell on this delicate subject, it is essential to mention

* For the number of houses destroyed by fire in Belgium see above, p. 23.

it, lest an argument should be drawn from our silence. Already Cardinal Mercier's reticence on this point has been interpreted in a way favourable to their own case by the German Catholics who have answered the French Catholics. In Appendix II, e, of the collective letter addressed on November 24th, 1915, by the Belgian Episcopate to the Austro-German Episcopate will be found the text of the correspondence exchanged on this question between the Archbishop of Malines and Baron von Bissing, Governor-General of occupied Belgium (see pp. 357-8 of the present volume).

All the rules of international law have been transgressed by the German army.* While individual excesses took place in great numbers, massacres and arson were carried out by order; they formed part of the German programme calmly elaborated in time of peace—they show us *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege* in action.

* * *

Nothing, however, can surpass in dastardly cruelty the system inaugurated by the German troops as soon as they came in contact with the Belgian army, the system of protecting themselves by driving men, women and children in front of them.

This cowardly and barbarous proceeding was adopted throughout the course of the campaign in Belgium. At Liège, at Tamines, at Dinant, at Andenne, at Mons, at Charleroi, at Tournai, at Termonde, at Alost, at Melle, at Sempst, at Hofstade and at Keyem, to name but some of the places, groups of civilians were forced to act as living shields for the German troops, and were massed on the bridges, exposed to artillery fire.†

* * *

Just as it is the higher authorities who formulate the German theories of war, so too it is they who give orders for and set the example of brutalities. During the fighting at Dinant on August 23rd, Captain Wilke was entrusted with the measures against the civil population; the orders he received were so rigorous that he felt it necessary to protect himself by invoking the authority of his superiors. Thus in his deposition he quotes the injunctions of his Major, of the Brigade Commander, and of the General of Division. All three successively order him to act with severity; the last-named, Edler von der Planitz, even emphasises the injunction, ordering him to refrain from any kind of indulgence, and to take the most stringent measures. Wilke considered his mission accomplished when about fifty men had been massacred (App. C 26). Lieutenant-Colonel Count Kielmansegg roundly declares that he caused a *hundred* guilty Dinantais of the male sex to be shot in pursuance of superior orders; his deposition, made at a calmer moment, on January 6th, 1915, contains no expression of regret. The witness declares, but without giving any indication of numbers, that his troops had suffered considerable (*namhaft*) losses; he makes no mention of any preliminary inquiry. He goes on to state that the wounded German soldiers were tended in a house arranged for this purpose together with citizens of Dinant, the latter wounded mainly by the fire of the enemy on the left bank of the Meuse. This gives Count Kielmansegg an opportunity to lay stress on German mildness; but he refrains from saying that the German soldiers were also victims of the enemy's fire. His deposition seems to make the civil population solely responsible for the wounds and deaths of these soldiers (App. C 7).

In exoneration of the German people it is only just to record the statement repeatedly made by private soldiers, horrified at the abominable tasks assigned them: "We only did a small part of what we had been ordered to do." Others shed tears as they executed the barbarous commands they had received, though they had not the courage to protest, for such is the subjection of the German soldier to discipline that it causes him to commit actions against which his conscience revolts, and for the majority alas! the immolation of the innocent with the guilty seems to have become both natural and immaterial.

* * *

Far from indulging in hostile acts towards the German troops, the peaceful Belgian population, in whose minds there was not the slightest idea of an eventual war, seems scarcely to have realised the new state of affairs in districts adjoining the Prussian frontier at the outset. Numerous witnesses declare that in this part of the country the inhabitants, touched by the sight of young soldiers exhausted with fatigue in the August heat, went spontaneously to offer

* From the very beginning of hostilities the provisions of the Hague Conventions as to bombardments, requisitions, the forcing of the inhabitants to render services entailing participation in military operations against their own country, have been systematically ignored (See the reports of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry, Vol. I, II., and the letter of the Belgian Episcopate to the Austro-German Episcopate, *infra*, p. 360). The use of projectiles forbidden by the International Conventions, and of treacherous methods of warfare have been repeatedly denounced (See more especially the Seventh Report of the Belgian Commission of Enquiry). The shells fired upon the forts of Liège during the first fortnight of August, 1914, were even then charged with poisonous gases. But it was on April 22nd, 1915, that the German army before Ypres began openly to violate the declaration of July 29th, 1899, which since then has become a dead letter (see the fourteenth Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry).

† See more especially the seventh, tenth and fifteenth Reports of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry, the report of the Public Prosecutor of Dinant (*infra*, p. 143), and the note of Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur (*infra*, p. 339).

refreshments and comforts to the German troops, forgetting, in the goodness of their hearts, that those they were thus welcoming were their enemies. Indeed, a considerable number of German officers and soldiers in depositions recorded in the "White Book" declare that they were correctly and even cordially received by the Belgian population (see, *inter alia*, App. 3, 8, 11, 12, 13, 16, 18, 39, 40, 43; Report on Andenne, p. 107, App. B 1; Report on Louvain, p. 233, paragraph 6, in which there are numerous references to passages where the statement in question is made; Report on Aerschot, pp. 91, 92).

But this attitude on the part of the population, far from being accepted by the "White Book" as an indication of its peaceful sentiments, is, on the contrary, indignantly denounced as a manifest proof of its perfidy.

Throughout the country, moreover, and not merely in the frontier districts, great reliance was placed on the strong discipline which was known to reign among the German troops. There was a general tendency to a kindly belief that individual excesses were less to be feared from German troops than from the soldiers of any other army. This illusion was so deeply rooted that many Belgians were only very gradually convinced by evidence as the narratives of eye-witnesses and of victims who had escaped from massacre spread abroad. The perusal of the German official proclamations completed the enlightenment of the incredulous, proving that in many places violence had been committed deliberately and by order.

* * *

The probatory value of the evidence on which the conclusions of the "White Book" are based may be perhaps estimated by the few examples that follow:—

Constabulary-Captain Karge (App. A 3, p. 98) declares that several German officers told him that according to a current rumour the Belgian Government, and in particular the King of the Belgians, had decreed that every male Belgian was bound to do as much harm as possible to the German army, and that, indeed, an order to this effect had been found upon a Belgian military prisoner. He had also heard that Belgian soldiers had been sent to their native communes to fight against the Germans as civilians; this was proved by the fact that Belgian soldiers, dressed partly or wholly in civilian clothes, had been taken prisoners. An officer had told Karge he had himself read on the door of a church tower in the environs of Aerschot that Belgians were forbidden to keep German officers prisoners on parole, and that it was their duty to shoot them. Karge adds that he cannot recall the exact words of this officer, but maintains that they certainly conveyed the meaning indicated above. Why was not this officer called upon to give evidence himself, as also the other officers who told Karge of the order found upon the Belgian soldier? The names of the propagators of these false statements are not given in the "White Book."

Sub-Lieutenant of Reserve Böhme relates (App. 53) that he saw a document (*Schein*) with an official seal, which, according to a Rhenish officer whose name is not given, was found in the communal hall of a village near Retinne. This paper, which was typewritten, invited the Belgian population in the name of the Government to offer armed resistance to the German troops and offered a reward for so doing. The amount of the reward was specified. Four other officers, mentioned by name, also saw the document. Why, we may ask, were none of them interrogated on the subject of a document so compromising for the Belgian Government, and why did not the Berlin Military Bureau of Inquiry demand that the Rhenish officer who discovered it should hand it over to them for publication?

The Reservist Westerkamp (App. D 37), whose perverted imagination would have sufficed to make his evidence suspect to any Committee but that which is installed at the Prussian War Office,* alleges that a Belgian told him nothing would have happened at Louvain had not the clergy declared from the pulpit that the blessing of God would rest (*selig gepriesen*) on those who fired on the German troops.

We cannot but draw the following conclusion: If the Military Bureau of Inquiry at Berlin, which for eight months was at perfect liberty to find witnesses among hundreds of thousands of German officers and soldiers, is reduced to bringing forward such absurdities, it is because its investigations did not, in its opinion, produce a sufficient number of serious documents to exculpate the German troops from the charges of atrocity brought against them by Belgian and foreign witnesses.

* Westerkamp, who gave evidence on January 10th, 1915, declares, *inter alia*, that on August 26th he met in the street at Louvain a soldier who was being carried on a litter, and according to what he was told, several inhabitants of the town had mutilated this man by cutting off his testicles. He further echoes the statements made on August 30th by Sub-Lieutenant Förster, concerning similar mutilations, said to have been inflicted on several German soldiers; the acts in question are so revolting that they could only have been imagined by an unhealthy mind. It is scarcely necessary to remark that if such deeds had really been done, they would have been officially recorded, or that at least Sub-Lieutenant Förster would have been interrogated on the subject if he had refrained from reporting it spontaneously to his superiors. The "White Book" reproduces Westerkamp's deposition without comment or reservation. (See for the alleged mutilations of German soldiers p. 45 *et seq* of the present volume.)

Is this tantamount to saying that the Belgian Government question the good faith of all those whose evidence is recorded in the "White Book?" By no means. They know that the German officers and soldiers, when they crossed the Belgian frontier, were obsessed by the suggestion that they would be attacked by *francs-tireurs*. They dreaded such attacks; memories of the war of 1870, still so vivid in Germany in all classes of society, had led them to expect them. Thus it was noted that from the very first days of the war the German troops felt a deep distrust of the civil population. Outside the actual battle-field the slightest noise startled them.* The bursting of a bicycle tyre, the explosion of a petard under a train, or of a gas motor, the deflagration of certain products in a laboratory attacked by fire, invariably raised the cry *Man hat geschossen* (someone fired), with all its sinister consequences. Thus it is really astounding to write, as does the "White Book," that the population treacherously attacked the unsuspecting (*nichts ahnend*, App. D 3, p. 249; *ahnungslos*, p. 107, etc., etc). German soldiers, when it is notorious that at the beginning of the war, whenever there were not large numbers of them present, these soldiers always had their rifles in their hands and their fingers on the trigger. Even in Brussels, when they had been in occupation of the capital for a year, the German soldiers as a general rule never walked about the streets without their rifles. The statement of the Berlin Military Bureau of Inquiry in connection with events at Andenne, to the effect that soldiers traversed this town *ahnungslos* (p. 107) is, moreover, expressly contradicted by the soldier Roleff (App. B 3, p. 111), who declares that they instantly returned the fire of the inhabitants, for they had been cautioned to be prudent and had accordingly made the necessary arrangements.

The propagation of the *francs-tireurs* obsession was carried on by means of literature, and more especially by the bellicose novels, which have appeared in Germany in such large numbers in recent years. Of one of these, *The Collapse of the Ancient World*, published in 1907, 150,000 copies were printed. Referring to the passage of German troops through Belgium, the author of this work states that the turbulent working class population, though incited by fanatical priests, remained passive at first (p. 67). But the German Army, when it had advanced as far as Charleroi without meeting with any resistance to speak of, found itself confronted here by the armed masses of the Socialists of the district. "The German troops," writes the author, "had imagined their first encounter with the enemy somewhat differently. Instead of meeting their foes in the open field (*in offener Feldschlacht*), they had to fight in the blazing streets against the dregs of the town, and a civil population possessed by a blind fury of fanaticism" (p. 68).†

But it was above all by war doctrines and military instruction that German officers and soldiers were prepared for the idea of reprisals to be eventually carried out against the civil population of hostile countries. The military manuals in use in Germany represent the operations of *francs-tireurs* as a certain eventuality of future warfare, and discourse of methods for guarding against the danger. One of these manuals, the *Military Interpreter*, written by the retired army captain, Von Scharfenort, Professor and Librarian at the Military Academy of Berlin,‡ treats the subject at great length. Is it surprising that, thus prepared to be exposed to treacherous attack on the part of the population, the first bodies of troops that trod on Belgian soil should have shown extreme nervous excitement directly they came in

* Nothing gives a better idea of this frame of mind than the following incident recorded by Count F. van den Steen de Jehay, Belgian Minister at Luxemburg, before the war, in an article in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of November 1st, 1915, entitled: *Comment s'est faite l'invasion du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg* (*How the Grand-Duchy of Luxemburg was invaded*). Major van Dyck had been instructed by the President of the Government, M. Eyschen, to take up his station on the bridge of Bock, on the road from Treves, on August 2nd, 1914, in order to present a protest on the part of the Grand-Ducal Government to the first German officer who should appear. On arriving at the appointed spot, Major van Dyck had his carriage drawn across the road, and awaited events. Presently a motor-car debouched from the Treves road and began to ascend the Bock incline. But all of a sudden it pulled up and turned back. Three hours later an armoured train arrived, bringing the first troops, who were to occupy the capital. The officer in command of the detachment was requested to present himself before the head of the Government. "Major van Dyck was waiting for you at the bridge of Bock," said M. Eyschen. "Why did the motor-car which was coming in that direction turn back?" "It was fired on," replied the officer. "I deny this formally," retorted Major van Dyck, who was present at the interview. "I was there alone with one of my men, and we were unarmed." It is true that on this occasion the German officer does not seem to have feared a surprise by *francs-tireurs*, but rather an attack by French troops. However this may be, the nervousness betrayed by this officer as early as the morning of August 2nd, that is to say, before any act of hostility had taken place, reveals the state of mind that obtained in the German army. How many similar mistakes occurred subsequently, for which German officers, imbued with the theories of the Great General Staff and emboldened by the presence of their troops, made inoffensive civilians suffer!

† *Der Zusammenbruch der alten Welt*, by Seestern (Leipzig, Theodor Weicher).

‡ A. Bath, publisher, Mohrenstrasse 8, Berlin, 1906. The following passage, *inter alia*, occurs on p. 140 of this manual: "In certain cases . . . the laws of war authorise . . . executions [of hostages] which are sometimes the only means of striking terror into a hostile population and preventing the recurrence of similar offences." (See also Note 25 of the *Bureau Documentaire Belge*, established at 52, Rue des Gobelins, Le Havre.)

• contact with small advance detachments of Belgian troops whom they could not see, and who were retiring before them, fighting as they went ? *

It is impossible to lay too much stress on the responsibility incurred by the German military authorities, not only for having exploited the hypothesis of the *francs-tireurs* war in time of peace in the interest of their methods of terrorisation, but also for having done nothing at the outset of the campaign to guard against the effects of this collective obsession. Now, far from having attempted anything of the kind, the German Government tolerated the publication in pamphlets and in the press of abominable stories concerning the supposed reception given to the German troops by the Belgian civil population, and the brutal treatment of German residents in Belgium at the very beginning of the war. The newspapers declared that in Brussels German women had been so unmercifully beaten that one of them had died, young children had been thrown out of windows, a man had been ripped open. Scenes even more terrible were said to have occurred at Antwerp. Not a word of all this was true. But the soldiers believed firmly in the truth of deeds they read of in all the newspapers, and thus hundreds of thousands of men who had as yet not come into contact with the Belgian population at all themselves crossed the Prussian frontier aflame with rage and thirsting for vengeance.†

The German Government must bear the entire responsibility for the results of these incitements, for in this country of unparalleled organisation there was no lack of means by which the propagation of this poisonous literature might have been checked. Certain stories, the falsity of which has been exposed and recognised even in Germany a hundred times, continue to reappear there : such, for instance, as the tale of the twenty-one German Jesuit Fathers murdered on August 7th, 1914, in a suburb of Liège, and that of the attack on the German troops by the women of Herstal, with weapons and with boiling water. This last story figures even in a recent pamphlet by Professor Clemen,‡ of Bonn University, without any sort of reservation as to its authenticity.

No doubt it may be urged that it was not obligatory for the " White Book " to include in its scope denials even of the most odious of these lying stories, although, by reason indeed of their outrageous character and the wide publicity given to them, they exercised a particularly disastrous influence on the attitude of the soldiers towards the Belgian civil population, and their incendiary tendencies perhaps explain the development of certain incidents between the inhabitants and the German troops. It might, however, have been expected from this official publication, a propagandist work designed above all to produce an impression in foreign countries, that it should have expressed some regret for the immoderate use made in Germany of these perfidious weapons against an enemy whose reputation does, in spite of everything, run the risk of permanent damage in certain minds.

When the first excitement at the outbreak of the war had subsided, several organs of the German press returned to a more equitable judgment of events, and tried to some extent to rehabilitate the Belgian population, which had been so grossly calumniated (see more especially the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* of September 10th, 1914, No. 799).§

* The first German troops crossed the Belgian frontier on August 4th, 1914, early in the morning. Their cruelties began on the same day, at the end of the afternoon. Even in the battle of the Yser, which did not begin until two and a half months after the invasion of the territory, certain German soldiers believed in the intervention of the *francs-tireurs*. Thus, the chaplain, Leinhos, apparently a cultivated man, wrote on November 3rd, 1914, from a trench before Dixmude : " We have some of the hardest of the fighting here in Northern Belgium, because the whole of the civil population is against us, and supports the enemy with thousands of *francs-tireurs*." (See p. 23-24, etc., Nos. 38, 39 of the series *Volksschriften zum grossen Krieg*, published by the *Evangelischer Bund*, Berlin, 1915.)

† See Massart : *Comment les Belges résistent à la domination allemande* (*How the Belgians resist German domination*), Payot & Co., pp. 126-134 and 229.

‡ *Die deutschen Greuel in Belgien und Nordfrankreich, nach dem offiziellen englischen Bericht*, p. 38 (Velhagen and Klasing, Bielefeld and Leipzig, 1916).

§ The article in question runs as follows :—

" The German press has been full for the last fortnight of stories of acts of brutality committed by the Belgians on our compatriots, and it might be supposed that all Belgium is a vast den of cut-throats whence no German could escape with his life save by some lucky chance.

" The author of these lines has no desire to question the truth of the numerous occurrences that have been reported. He was himself an eye-witness of the manner in which the populace in the heart of Brussels, enraged by the news of Germany's first step, gave vent to its anger by attacking German shops and restaurants. He has heard that some Germans were very roughly treated. He himself was subjected to insults from some of the rowdy elements. He is far from wishing to excuse any of these acts. But he is anxious to state that these excesses were committed by disorderly bands drawn from the dregs of the population.

" . . . The writer of these lines was obliged to leave Brussels with his family on Friday, August 7th, at daybreak. We had had to spend the night of Thursday to Friday at the German Consulate, which was already under American protection. About 3,000 of our compatriots had sought refuge there with their wives and children, taking a few necessities with them, in order to safeguard their lives and secure their return to their native country under official protection.

" I met there many foreign families who had fled from the French frontier, who had already spent two days and two nights without taking off their clothes, and whose supply of food had been most precarious. Huddled together at the German Consulate, we sat on the floor, in the passages, and on the staircases. By reason, no doubt, of the danger of keeping such a number of persons in a comparatively

Footnote continued on page 42.

It is much to be regretted that the compilers of the "White Book," who claim judicial functions, should not have been actuated by the same sense of rectitude and respect for truth.

* * *

It is incontestable that the German commanders constantly attributed to the civil population acts of hostility and defensive preparations the true authors of which were small detachments of regular troops, who fell back after accomplishing their mission. The leaders of the German army were disconcerted by these skirmishing tactics, in which the Belgian soldier excels. Perhaps they only consider scientifically regulated operations in mass to be legitimate acts of war, or again, they may hold that stratagems and surprise attacks are only meritorious and permissible when they are carried out by their own troops. One is inclined to believe this when one finds the "White Book" denouncing as *Meuchelmörder* (treacherous murderers) all those who undertake such detached actions against them, and imputing these actions *de plano* and without inquiry to the civil population. The German chiefs took a short way to put an end to this indubitably lawful warfare of surprise and ambush: it was to identify the civil population with and make it responsible for the acts of the soldiers.

We are led to conclude that the procedure of the Germans was the application of a system by the fact that the repression of the so-called acts of the *francs-tireurs* took place with the utmost frequency and intensity in places where the allied troops had been shortly before. This was the case in the villages of the district between Aix-la-Chapelle and Liège, at Aerschot, at Dinant, at Andenne, in the villages to the south of the province of Luxemburg and in Hainault.

Taking into account the prepossessions with which their minds were impregnated, it is quite possible that in certain cases German officers should have honestly believed that they had to deal with aggressions on the part of the population; but even if this be admitted they cannot be exonerated from having allowed themselves to be deceived so easily, and having proceeded to absolutely unjustifiable acts of summary justice. Moreover, the war-morality proclaimed by *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*, the doctrine that "the only true humanity very often lies in a ruthless application of certain severities" (p. 3; Engl. ed., p. 55)—those which are "indispensable to war"—leaves very little room for those extenuating circumstances which persons whose minds recoil with almost insurmountable repugnance from loss of their own illusions and of faith in human nature, are inclined to adduce in favour of the German leaders.

Major de Mélotte, Belgian Military Attaché in Berlin at the time when war broke out, who at the beginning of the campaign was detailed for service with the corps of French cavalry operating in Belgium, has made the following statements in this connection, statements which sum up the situation very clearly:—

"I was able to ascertain in the course of operations both on the right and the left bank of the Meuse, that the German invaders had sent out strong patrols or reconnaissances of officers very far ahead of the main force. Many of these officers were made prisoners. They surrendered, indeed, very readily and sometimes without fighting, only too thankful to be done with it all. This was strange, inasmuch as these patrols were composed of picked men. There were, however, some gallant individuals among the commanders of these patrols, such as Lieutenant von Brandenstein, of the Guards, who only surrendered (at Maissin, province of Luxemburg), after killing three men and being twice wounded.

"To sum up: many of these cavalry patrols, sent forward very far in advance, never returned to the German lines for one reason or another. I have long been convinced that the Germans attributed these disappearances to the action of the civil population. Hence reprisals, due either to a desire for vengeance or to fear. I can affirm that the civil population held absolutely aloof from the conflict, and that the lack of skill or of energy on the part of the leaders of advanced patrols was the sole cause of their loss."

small and therefore ill-lit house, it was decided about midnight to transfer us to the Cirque Royal. This is a large building, very spacious and well ventilated, situated only a few minutes' walk from the Consulate, and belonging to the municipality. During the transfer, as in the circus itself, and the next morning at dawn, on our way to the station, we were in the custody of soldiers of the Civic Guard, who treated us with so much consideration that they seemed rather to be acting as our protectors than our custodians. The sight of these innumerable fugitives with their wives and children and their scanty possessions, passing along at night, guarded by soldiers with fixed bayonets, was certainly a pitiable one, and in spite of the hour, we heard exclamations of compassion from the inhabitants, watching us from the windows of their houses. The soldiers were no less sympathetic. There was not one of them whose expression, words and gestures did not reveal humane pity. Many of the guards helped their unhappy charges by carrying their children or their valises. Burgomaster Max arrived himself in a motor-car at 2 o'clock in the morning to make sure that everything was in order. In the circus again the soldiers looked after the children, distributing milk and food. An eye-witness told me he saw them making up a subscription for a destitute family. An officer on duty, who was a friend of mine, insisted upon taking my wife and children away to his own house close by, for the time we were to wait in the circus. The soldiers who were instructed to collect weapons made every effort to speak German as well as they could. In a word, they all did everything in their power to succour the fugitives."

Thus massacre and arson appear as acts of vengeance wreaked upon the civil population in return for the checks inflicted on the Imperial forces by the regular troops. These checks afforded the German military leaders a welcome pretext for calling the population to account, after denouncing them to the soldiers, and so legitimatising "reprisals" in the eyes of the latter. Recourse to such measures had a definite object of general application: they were designed to obstruct certain operations of the enemy by terrorising the population, and to relieve the German military authorities from the necessity of leaving a considerable army of occupation in Belgium. Perhaps there was even some hope of inducing the Belgian Government, under pressure of panic-stricken public opinion, to put an end to the resistance of the army, whose action, from the very first days of the war, had compromised the triumphant victory so confidently reckoned upon by the German High Command.

In certain cases, indeed, "reprisals" were not a result of engagements with the enemy on the spot; we may instance Louvain. But in this town, again, the system of terrorisation was applied, as Herr Walther Bloem admits (see *supra*, p. 28). The most trustworthy Belgian and neutral eye-witnesses of the events which took place at Louvain are unanimous in declaring that the inhabitants indulged in no acts of hostility against the German troops; the commanders of these troops assert the contrary. But even if the German authorities were the victims of a mistake—unpardonable as this would have been—they cannot maintain that there was any proportion between the gravity of the offence and its repression. At Louvain, as elsewhere in Belgium, the object was to strike terror.

* * *

Germany can never wash herself clean of the opprobrium that weighs upon her. From the very first days of the invasion accounts of scenes of violence and drunkenness, of attacks upon wine-cellars, of depredations of every kind, of indescribably filthy acts, of shameless pillage, were placed on record; the officers permitted these things, if they did not themselves take part in the excesses. Massacres and arson began almost immediately, ordered and carried out according to a methodical plan.

The German Government is responsible for the conduct of their troops—are not their armies the most perfectly disciplined in the world? The ninety-three German savants and artists, as we know, had such confidence in this discipline that they did not hesitate to make a spontaneous declaration of their concurrence in all the acts of the German soldiers, denying, in their manifesto of October 2nd, 1914, that the life or property of a single Belgian civilian had been attacked without absolute necessity. The very rigour of this discipline adds to the crushing weight of responsibility incurred by the supreme chiefs of the German army, those deliberate violators of the rules of international law, instigators of massacre and devastation, protagonists in methods of terrorisation. It is the military system itself, the whole German theory of war, which is at the bar.

From this point of view the advance made since 1870 may be appreciated if we read the famous proclamation addressed by the King of Prussia in August of that year to the French nation. It will be well to recall the text here: "I am making war on the French soldiers and not on the inhabitants of France. The latter will therefore continue to enjoy complete security of person and property as long as they do not themselves deprive me of the right of granting them my protection by hostile enterprises against the German troops." The chiefs of the present German army are imbued with the idea that "humanitarian claims, such as the protection of life and property, can only be taken into consideration in so far as the nature and object of the war permit." (Introduction to the Manual, *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*, p. 2; Engl. ed., p. 52).*

Reading the "White Book," it is easy to perceive that the German officers, thoroughly indoctrinated with the teaching they had received, were never at a loss to find military reasons incompatible with "humanitarian claims" when they ordered massacres. To their minds it is natural that the innocent should suffer with the guilty, and even instead of the guilty—or

* We may appreciate the difference between the proceedings of 1914 and those of 1870 if we compare the fate of the town of Laon with that which befell the towns and villages of Belgium. The German army commanded by the Duke of Mecklenburg, entered Laon on September 9th, 1870. Scarcely had the citadel been handed over when an explosion took place; the keeper of explosives, an old soldier whose head had been turned by the misfortunes of his country, had blown up the powder-magazine, and 100 German soldiers lay on the ground; the Duke of Mecklenburg was wounded. The German soldiers began to fire on the French Mobiles. The Duke of Mecklenburg threatened to take exemplary vengeance on the town. Count Alvensleben intervened, pleading the cause of the city. He succeeded in calming the Duke, who ordered the firing to cease (see ERNEST LAVISSE, *Essais sur l'Allemagne Impériale*, p. 16, Paris, Hachette). It may be affirmed without hesitation that had such an occurrence taken place in the course of the present war the town would have been razed to the ground and hundreds of the inhabitants would have been shot.

rather, with and instead of those whom their brutal doctrines lead them to consider guilty without inquiry or sentence. Did they not at Aerschot shoot one civilian prisoner out of every three *haphazard*, and at Hasselt did not the military authorities threaten to put *a third of the male population* to death, should the inhabitants fire upon the German soldiery? A vast majority, if not the whole, of the thousands of Belgian civilians executed, were sacrificed to theories based exclusively on the interests of Germany.

* * *

As in 1914, so again in 1915, the Imperial Government had recourse to terror to ensure its domination. On August 27th, 1914, Father Dupierreux was shot at Tervueren because a few lines of manuscript were found upon him, declaring that the Germans, like a barbarian horde, had laid waste the country with fire and sword, and comparing the fate of the Library of Louvain University with that of the Library of Alexandria, burnt by Omar.* On October 12th, 1915, Miss Edith Cavell, an English nurse, who helped soldiers to escape, was executed at Brussels only a few hours after sentence had been pronounced, in order to foil any attempt at intercession; it was necessary to make an example at all costs, as Herr Zimmermann, Under-Secretary at the Imperial Foreign Office, himself declared in an interview he granted to a representative of the *Associated Press*.†

The majority of the Belgian civilians, numbering some 5,000, who fell victims to the German armies, were executed for alleged acts of hostility or cruelty; only had they been proved with absolute certainty against each one of them—which was not the case—might these acts, perhaps, have called for severe punishment. Neither Father Dupierreux nor Miss Cavell, as the German authorities themselves admit, committed any offence of the kind. Not their crimes, but the interests of Germany caused their death.

Further, it behoves us to note that the death-sentences pronounced by the military courts were never more frequent in Belgium than at the period following upon the reverses suffered by the German troops in Artois and Champagne at the end of September, 1915; fresh examples were no doubt considered necessary to safeguard the communications of the Imperial army.‡

Thus terrorisation appears to be the method of government *par excellence* of the German authorities, and this not only during the frenzy of the invasion of Belgium, but at a time when, a whole year after the close of military operations, their judges have full leisure to apportion punishment to the gravity of the offence, and to weigh the rigour of the sentences they pronounce on Belgian patriots.

SECTION II.

ACTS OF CRUELTY.

The accusations brought against the Belgian population of having committed acts of cruelty upon the German wounded were first officially formulated, it appears,§ in a proclamation made by General von Bülow, dated August 13th, 1914. He invoked them to justify the levy of a war contribution of 50 million francs on the province of Liège. This proclamation was drawn up at Montjoie in Prussia; in fixing its terms, General von Bülow was guided entirely by reports made to him.

* See p. 263 of the present volume.

† See *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, October 26th, 1915, No. 548.

‡ Twenty-three death-sentences were pronounced in occupied Belgium during the month of October, 1915; nineteen executions took place and four sentences were commuted.

§ A telegram from the semi-official Wolff Agency of August 8th, 1914, had, however, already accused the population about Liège of having taken part in the fighting, and of having committed acts of cruelty upon the wounded. It announced that if these deeds recurred war would also be waged upon the guilty population with relentless rigour, and for this, it added, the enemies of Germany would have only themselves to blame.

On September 4th the Emperor William reiterated these accusations in the message he sent to the President of the United States of America: "The Belgian Government," he said, "has openly encouraged the civil population to take part in the fighting, and has for a long time carefully organised the resistance. The cruelties perpetrated in this guerilla warfare even by women and priests on wounded soldiers, doctors, and hospital nurses (doctors have been killed and ambulances fired upon) were such that our generals were compelled at last to adopt extreme measures for the punishment of the guilty and to terrorise the bloodthirsty population, thus preventing it from continuing its murders and deeds of horror."*

The Imperial Chancellor on September 2nd, 1914, addressing the representatives of the great American press agencies, expressed himself as follows: "What you have not been told is that on the battle-fields young Belgian girls put out the eyes of our defenceless wounded."

It is interesting to note that the date of this Imperial telegram and of this statement by the German Chancellor coincide with the despatch by H.M. the King of the Belgians of a special mission, under the direction of the Minister of Justice, to the President of the United States of America. This mission, which left Antwerp August 30th, 1914, and landed at New York on September 11th, was sent for the very object of calling the attention of the United States Government to the situation of Belgium in consequence of the violation of her neutrality and the methods of warfare adopted by the Germans from the first days of their entrance into the country. Was there not some connection between a desire to counteract the effect on American opinion of the protests and documents brought by the Belgian Mission to the United States President, and the Imperial telegram and the Chancellor's statement, the violent and categorical terms of which were eminently calculated to give a false impression? There is every reason to think so.

The Note of the Imperial Foreign Office, at the beginning of the "White Book," declares for its part that the German wounded were stripped and killed by the Belgian population, and even horribly mutilated. Women and young girls are said to have taken part in these abominable outrages. Thus we are told that the German wounded were blinded, that their ears, noses, fingers and sexual organs were cut off, and their bellies ripped open; in other cases, that German soldiers were poisoned, hanged on trees, sprinkled with burning liquids or burnt in some other manner, "so that their deaths were especially painful" (p. 4).

* * *

What is the evidence for these extraordinary assertions on the part of the German Government?

Accounts of atrocities attributed to the Belgian population are fairly numerous in the "White Book." Nearly a hundred of the Appendices contain depositions concerning acts of this description, but nine of them, App. C 56, 59, 61, 67 and 74 to 78, deal probably with the single case of a Saxon *Jäger*, whose charred body was found at Dinant; it is, however, not impossible that not one alone, but two German soldiers, may have been found in this state. On the other hand, three depositions, reproduced in App. 55, refer to the corpse of the same volunteer of one year's service belonging to the 5th Company of the 165th Infantry Regiment, which was discovered at Herve, with the eyes put out, as it was alleged, by Belgian civilians. The two depositions of App. 62 relate to the same atrocity.

Setting aside obvious errors, the accusation against the Belgian population of having blinded German soldiers is only formulated in the "White Book" by ten military witnesses, in App. 54, 55 (three witnesses to the same occurrence), 58, 59, 63, 64, 65 and C 78. The statements of these ten refer at most to thirteen or fourteen cases. Only one of these witnesses was an officer, Captain von Lippe.

* Literal translation from the text of the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*. The text of the telegram was posted on the walls of Brussels, September 11th, 1914.

He made his statement near Dinant on August 23rd, 1914, that is to say on a day of battle, behind the fighting position of the second section of the Field Artillery Regiment No. 12 (App. C 78). It must be noted that the report of the deposition of this officer is the *only* one of the eighty-seven annexes to the Chapter of the "White Book" dealing with events at Dinant in which there is any allusion whatever to this kind of atrocity. The very unusual character of this evidence certainly suggests some doubt as to its accuracy: a whole, or very nearly a whole, Army Corps was concentrated in the district where the case was observed. Is it credible that the officer should not have asked the opinion of a military doctor? How much more weighty the evidence of a man qualified to pronounce upon the cause of the injury would have been!

Moreover, *no* military doctor, nor even any non-commissioned officer or private of the Medical Corps, noticed any mutilation of this particular kind on the spot in Belgium; at least such is the conclusion we are entitled to draw from the complete absence of statements by doctors or hospital orderlies as to the blinding of German soldiers, among the 212 appendices of the "White Book." We shall see further on that neither was any statement made in Germany as to mutilations of this kind.

One of the imputations specially calculated to stir up the opinion of the civilised world against the Belgian people was the statement, vouched for *inter alia* by the Emperor William's telegram of September 4th and the Imperial Chancellor's assertion of September 2nd, 1914, that *even women* and children had perpetrated cruelties on the German wounded. "What you have not been told," said von Herr Bethmann-Hollweg, "is that on the battle-fields young Belgian girls put out the eyes of our defenceless wounded." It is more particularly by incessant repetition of this supremely odious accusation that Germany strove, and is still striving, to tarnish the honour of Belgium. Do the depositions inserted in the "White Book" give any support to this imputation? None whatever. In the first place, out of the ten military men who speak of blinded soldiers, eight saw dead soldiers alleged to have been mutilated in this manner, and only two saw wounded soldiers. In App. 54 a wounded soldier is reported to have said to the Reservist Weisse and his comrades: "Take me away, they have just put out my eyes." In App. 59 the Infantryman Lagershausen declares that he saw in a first-aid station four or five cruelly mutilated soldiers among some fifteen wounded; their eyes had been put out, and the fingers of several of them had been hacked off. Secondly, women are only once mentioned in connection with soldiers whose eyes are said to have been put out, and that is in App. 59, quoted above. In his deposition, Lagershausen says that four Belgian women were giving drink to the wounded, in the absence, it would seem, of any German doctor—and therefore on their own initiative; he adds that he cannot say positively whether these women and the two or three men who were also in the house committed the cruelties described by him. Thus absolutely nothing remains of the abominable accusation brought by the Imperial Chancellor against the Belgian women; at least, such is the conclusion we are entitled to draw from the fact that not one of the 212 annexes of the "White Book" contains any such imputation.

As to the participation of Belgian women in other atrocities, a deposition concerning such participation is contained in App. 60; the accusation, which deals with a mutilation noted near Visé, the details of which respect for our readers forbids us to insert, is formulated by the Landwehr soldier, Mathias Koch, a man apparently under an obsession of atrocities. Koch also vouches for a second act of cruelty (a finger cut off), in which women, however, took no part; he further echoes the assertions of German stretcher-bearers, who are said to have told him that they had frequently seen soldiers with the third finger cut off. The evidence of these stretcher-bearers does not figure in the "White Book." Infantryman Blankenburg declares he saw near Herve little girls of from eight to ten years old, who had just cut off the lobes of the ears of several wounded Germans (App. 56); the depositions of none of these men are given in the "White Book," though one of them himself certified the fact to Blankenburg. Finally, Steffen, a sergeant in the Army Medical Department (App. 62), declares that Sub-Lieutenant Erich Koch had told him how he was ill-treated at Porcheresse, not only by men, but by women. Koch, when wounded, was stripped naked, robbed, and thrown into a liquid manure trench. Sub-Lieutenant Erich Koch's deposition is not in the "White Book." There is

no other appendix in the volume in which Belgian women are accused of acts of atrocity.

Other atrocities besides the putting out of eyes are, as we know, recorded in the "White Book."

Six soldiers are said to have had their ears or noses cut off, in addition to those who were mutilated by little girls of from eight to ten years old. The number of these victims is not given (App. 55, 56, 57, 58 and 66).

Three depositions relate to soldiers whose sexual organs are said to have been cut off (App. 55, 60 and D 37). The Reservist Westerkamp declares he saw a soldier carried on a stretcher at Louvain, whose testicles, he was told, had been cut off by several of the inhabitants; this man is said to have died of his wounds. No official attestation whatever of this incident, medical or otherwise, is to be found in the "White Book." Westerkamp further relates that Sub-Lieutenant Förster spoke to him of mutilations of a similar kind inflicted on German soldiers; it is impossible to reproduce here the details of the incidents recorded (App. D 37). This soldier seems to have a disordered mind; but we may ask how an official Commission of Inquiry could lend itself to the propagation of these infamous tales, of which no proof whatever is offered. As to the evidence of Sub-Lieutenant Förster, we seek it in vain in the "White Book" (see also p. 39, note *). We have just spoken of the evidence of the soldier Mathias Koch (App. 60).

Two private soldiers maintain that at Louvain boiling pitch was thrown upon the troops by the inhabitants (App. D 25 and 29); no officer, no doctor, no non-commissioned officer confirms the statement. Major von Polentz asserts that at Andenne boiling water was hurled at his men, one hundred of whom were scalded (App. B 2, and p. 107). This assertion is at best the result of a gross error; as this error was not rectified on March 29th, 1915, the date inscribed on the Report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry at Berlin concerning occurrences at Andenne, we have a right to stigmatise the allegations of Major von Polentz and of the Military Bureau as lies. It is superfluous to add that, as usual, the accusation is unsupported by any medical evidence, although no less than 100 men are supposed to have been suffering from burns!

Errors apart, the "White Book" gives eleven depositions concerning soldiers totally or partially burnt or carbonised; nine of these depositions (App. C 56, 59, 61, 67 and 74 to 78) probably refer, as stated above, to one and the same soldier.* The other two depositions relating to incidents of this kind are recorded in App. 61 and 63.

We read of a case of poisoning by sugar which took place at Deynze; if this was a fact, it was certainly not due to malice (App. 50).† App. 62 speaks of Sub-Lieutenant Koch, stripped naked, robbed, and thrown into a trench of liquid manure at Porcheresse (see below, p. 48); App. 55 (3d) of an infantryman drowned in a water-hole between Herve and Liège; App. 58 of an infantryman abominably mutilated and of a hussar nailed to a tree near Herve;‡ App. 23 and 24 deal with the case of an infantryman bound to a fence at Tintigny, with his skull fractured by a blow from a pickaxe; App. 55 speaks of a hussar hanged on a tree near Herve; App. 66 of two volunteers with their ears and noses cut off, their skulls fractured, and their bellies ripped open, found near Thourout, and also of a soldier with his nose and ears cut off and his belly ripped open, found at Eessen-Kappel; App. C 59 of a corporal with his skull split open, noticed among the corpses deposited in the courtyard of the Château de Sorinne; App. D 35 of a soldier with his belly ripped open, found at Louvain. A certain number of soldiers are said to have had their fingers cut off (App. 58, 59, 60).§

It is essential to note that a very considerable number of the various mutilations separately recorded above in view of their classification into categories were, or are

* See pp. 45 and 162.

† See p. 88.

‡ See below, p. 50 and p. 91.

§ It seems impossible to accept, as does the "White Book," the deposition of the Reservist Erwin Müller as establishing acts of atrocity. This man is supposed to have found in a house at Dinant an officer, a non-commissioned officer and eight German soldiers who had been surprised in their sleep and massacred by civilians (App. C 73). See on this subject p. 163.

said to have been, *inflicted on the same soldiers*; collation of the numbers given in the appendices will satisfy the reader as to this. Thus, for instance, the soldier Ernst Baldeweg declares he saw an infantryman with his eyes put out, his nose, his ears and his fingers cut off, his belly ripped open, and his breast lacerated (App. 58). The four or five wounded men whose mutilation is attested by Lagershausen had their eyes put out and their fingers cut off (App. 59). Similar examples are to be found in App. 55, 63, 66, &c.

Even if we admit that all these atrocities are established facts*—which is far indeed from the truth in nearly all, if not all, cases, taking into account the almost entire lack of medical evidence relating to them†—the total number is so insignificant that it would be a most flagrant injustice to make the whole Belgian population responsible for them. Now this is the task the compilers of the “White Book” have set themselves in their efforts to produce the impression that acts of atrocity were committed in great numbers and in every quarter, efforts designed to justify the extent of the so-called “reprisals” in Belgium, the sole object of which was the terrorisation of the country.

Further, is it not extraordinary that certain soldiers, such as Voigt (App. 55), Baldeweg (App. 58), Mathias Koch (App. 60), Chaton (App. 63), Westerkamp (App. C 37), and several others, have a whole series of abominable deeds to record, whereas hundreds of thousands of German soldiers passed through Belgium without observing anything of the sort, and the number of those who claim to have noted acts of cruelty is, in fact, infinitesimal?

One of the most remarkable features of these narratives is that the majority of them emanate from men who do not hold the rank of officers. Among 34 witnesses we find only five officers and three doctors. The remaining 26 are made up of 19 privates, three infantry or cavalry corporals, two non-commissioned officers, and two non-commissioned officers of the Army Medical Department.‡ It was obviously preferred to leave the responsibility for accusations to private soldiers, even when these repeat the statements of officers (see, for instance, App. 62 and D 37). Captain Troeger merely reports incidents of which he had been informed by third persons, Captain zur Nieden and the non-commissioned officer Schnitzer, whose direct and personal testimony does not appear in the “White Book” (App. 66). Only Captains Rumland (App. 24), Sternberg (App. 61), and Von Lippe (App. C 78), and Major von Polentz (App. B 2), speak of facts they themselves noted. Major von Polentz’ story, moreover, as we have shown above, is absolutely untrue.

As to the military doctors, Dr. Beyer recounts incidents which, in part at least, were reported to him by Sub-Lieutenant Erich Koch§ (App. 62). Dr. Köckeritz (App. C 67), and Dr. Holey (App. C 74), themselves saw the charred body of the Saxon Jäger (see p. 228). The innumerable other doctors belonging to the German army apparently observed no “atrocities” in Belgium, for with the exception of the depositions of the three doctors mentioned above, the “White Book” contains no medical evidence concerning acts of this nature. With very few exceptions, the men who claim to have witnessed them were private soldiers or non-commissioned officers (see above); on their ignorance, their lack of perception or their unscrupulousness the “White Book” is obliged to reply in order to give official sanction to the legend of Belgian atrocities inaugurated by the Emperor William and the Imperial Chancellor! ||

* In connection with the accusations brought against the Belgian population, it is important to read the refutations made by Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur, in the note appended to his letter to Baron von Bissing of November 6th, 1915, and by Monseigneur Rutten, Bishop of Liège, in his letter of November 1st, 1915 (see pp. 323 and 346).

† The “White Book” does not contain a single duly formulated and properly attested medical certificate.

‡ These figures are given by way of example.

§ Koch, who had been shot through the perinæum and whose rectum was perforated, told Dr. Beyer that he was stripped and thrown into a liquid manure trench by the inhabitants of Porcheresse. He says not a word as to the circumstances under which he was afterwards rescued from the manure trench and transported to the ambulance at Graide. See on this subject the note appended by Monseigneur Heylen on October 31st to his letter of November 6th, 1915, addressed to the Governor-General of occupied Belgium, p. 330).

|| Captain von Sandt declares in his third deposition (App. D 8, p. 258), that he did not himself see mutilated soldiers at Louvain; but some Marines, he thinks of the 7th Battalion, told him in a manner worthy of credence (*glaubhaft*) that a soldier with his skull battered in had been found in the

We must repeat: the imputation which the German Government has made with the most extreme violence and frivolity, that of the blinding of the wounded, is supported by nine private soldiers and one solitary officer. *No military or civilian doctor*, either in Belgium or Germany, has endorsed it with the authority of his name.

However, the "White Book" eagerly accepts the evidence of the infantry Reservist, Lagershausen, a youth of nineteen, who does not hesitate to declare that on August 6th he saw, among fifteen wounded men deposited in a farm near Chénée, four or five soldiers whose eyes had been put out (*es waren ihnen beide Augen ausgestochen*) and fingers cut off (App. 59). This youth, not having spoken with these wounded men, does not undertake to transmit their complaints;* his accusation is based solely, it would seem, on an impression. It is not unreasonable to feel the gravest doubts, if not as to the sincerity, at least as to the perspicacity and judgment of young Lagershausen, who may very well have been mistaken in respect of the cause of the wounds he attributes to mutilation. The "White Book," moreover, makes no mention of the inquiry which was doubtless held, and the measures taken against the guilty persons. This silence is the more surprising, seeing that the village of Chénée is at the very gates of Liège, where German troops were massed in considerable numbers in the month of August, 1914. The "White Book" also puts on record the opinion of Private Rohr, aged twenty-three, according to whom there is no doubt that two Uhlans not otherwise wounded, whom he found in a barn at the end of August, 1914, died of injuries due to the putting out of their eyes. The soldier mentions in his deposition that he at once reported his discovery to the commandant of his battalion. Although the spot where it was made was close to Brussels no inquiry seems to have been held; or, if held, the result was no doubt negative. Be this as it may, there is not a word on the subject in the "White Book"—but it upholds the accusation (App. 65). The book-keeper Chaton also declares unhesitatingly that "the nature of the wound made it evident that the eyes of the Dragoon (whom he found lying in a street at Charleroi) had been put out maliciously and not in battle" (App. 63). No medical certificate appears in the "White Book" to confirm the diagnosis of the book-keeper, who, it would seem, bases his conviction on the fact that from a distance of 50 or 60 paces he saw a struggle between the Dragoon and three civilians, and that one of the latter had in his hand a blood-stained dagger. When Chaton approached the Dragoon, whose body had been set on fire, the victim had ceased to live (see p. 120).

The extreme indigence of the "White Book" in the matter of medical evidence and the depositions of officers makes it reasonable to suppose that some of the soldiers who declare that they noted acts of atrocity were mistaken—perhaps honestly mistaken. But if we may believe the German press of the months of August, September and October, 1914, many soldiers, out of braggadocio or for other reasons, told tales of purely imaginary atrocities. Among the "witnesses" of the "White Book" were there no visionaries or impostors? An analysis of certain depositions leaves no doubt on this head.

It should further be noted that the so-called mutilated persons brought no personal accusations against the Belgian population before competent German authorities (military or civil tribunals).† The German "White Book" contains but a single deposition made by an alleged victim of Belgian atrocities, that of the Reservist Hilberath (App. 50), who believes that he, together with several of his comrades, some of whom died, were poisoned by sugar they bought at Deynze (see p. 88). The circumstances under which this poisoning is supposed to have taken place, as also the absence of medical attestations and proceedings against the offender—at any rate the "White Book" makes no allusion to either—are

Hotel de Suède. These same Marines told him that another soldier, whose arms and legs had been chopped off with a hatchet, had been found in the Rue Marie-Thérèse. It should be said that neither the introductory note (p. 4) nor the Report of the Military Bureau concerning Louvain (p. 235) refers to von Sandt's deposition, which was no doubt considered too questionable; but this did not prevent the insertion of the odious accusation in the "White Book." Captain von Sandt is not counted among the 34 witnesses mentioned above.

* He only spoke to some other un mutilated wounded, who told him there was no doctor in the house.

† Statements by the mutilated appear, it is true, in App. 54, 56 and 62, but they are reported by third parties. With the exception of Sub-Lieutenant Koch (App. 62), these victims were found close to the German frontier. It seems really very strange that after they had been removed to Germany they should not have been called upon to make a personal deposition confirmatory of the declarations attributed to them by third persons, with which the compilers of the "White Book" were apparently satisfied.

such that the idea of malice on the part of the grocer seems quite untenable. If the mutilated made no complaints it was because there were no mutilations; it is, in fact, incredible that not one of the alleged victims of Belgian cruelty should have survived his injuries, and that the protests of the mutilated should not have been duly formulated.

Thus an examination of the documents inserted in the "White Book" leads to the conclusion that the German Government is unable to furnish proofs of those atrocities which for a year and a half it has never ceased to lay to the charge of the Belgian people.

* * *

The evidence of the Reservist Ernst Baldeweg claims special attention (App. 58). In his short deposition, made at Magdeburg on November 1st, 1914, this man declares he saw: 1. In a village near Verviers, on August 8th, 1914, four horses in one stable and one horse in another stable whose tongues had been cut out in order, he assumes, that they might not be carried off by the Germans; 2. On August 9th or 10th, near Herve, a Hussar tied by his hands and feet to a tree, to which he was further fastened by two large stout nails, which had been driven into his eyes and through his head; 3. In the same place an infantry soldier lying near a farm, his eyes put out, his nose, ears and fingers cut off, his belly ripped open, and his breast lacerated! It must be noted that there is no evidence in the "White Book," other than that of Baldeweg, concerning horses whose tongues had been cut out. As to the mutilations of the infantry soldier, we may remark, with all due reserve as to the fundamental truth of the statement, that Baldeweg is the only witness who observed such a number of mutilations on a single victim.

Baldeweg was taken prisoner some time after this, in France. Although he was a soldier in the 11th Company of the 35th Regiment of the Line, he passed himself off as an ambulance orderly, and as such was liberated. Part of his deposition, inserted in the "White Book," published by the German Government in answer to accusations against the German troops, and entitled *Widerlegung der von der französischen Regierung erhobenen Anschuldigungen* (Refutation of the Accusations brought by the French Government), relates to the ill-treatment said to have been inflicted on the German wounded in the fortress of Blaye (Appendix 26). These are the terms in which the French Minister for War refutes Baldeweg's assertions in a letter of September 15th, 1915, addressed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in answer to the allegations put forward in the "White Book" (p. 1).

"Information received from the Commandant of the dépôt for prisoners at Blaye shows conclusively that the criticisms in question are entirely baseless. The wounded have never lacked the most attentive care; the German doctors were never at any time prevented from tending their compatriots. On the contrary, it was remarked that these doctors showed little zeal to avail themselves of the permission to dress wounds, so little, indeed, that the medical inspector who visited the fortress was obliged to threaten them with arrest if they did not exert themselves more in the service of their own wounded. However, these two doctors seem to have had very little knowledge of surgery.

"Moreover, at the date in question, Miss Mary Bayle O'Reilly, Inspector of the State prisons of Massachusetts (U.S.A.) from 1900 to 1912, was allowed to visit the fortress of Blaye together with Miss Grace Ellison. Both agreed in their testimony to the excellent state in which they found the dépôt, not only as regards general cleanliness and diet, but also in respect of the kindness of the French to their prisoners.

"As to Baldeweg, in the examination to which he was subjected at Blaye, when he put forward his status as an ambulance orderly as a plea for his return to Germany, he declared he had taken no part in the fighting on September 7th, and had confined himself entirely to his mission, which was to pick up the wounded; he added that his own conduct had been irreproachable 'both towards civilians and soldiers.'

"Now it appears from the deposition made before the German military magistrate that on this occasion Baldeweg states himself to be, not an ambulance orderly, but a Reservist of the 35th Regiment of Infantry, a statement which seems to be correct this time, since he declares that he played the part of a belligerent on September 7th, and even boasts of having killed a French Dragoon.

"It is therefore important to note the dishonesty of Private Baldeweg, a combatant who claimed to be, and was released as, an ambulance orderly, or who, if he really was one, acted as a belligerent in defiance of the rules of the Geneva Convention" (Art. 7).

What credence can be given to the tales of this impostor, the only one among the hundreds of thousands of German soldiers passing through Belgium who mentions the mutilation of animals, and who claims to have noted so many acts of atrocity peculiarly abnormal and odious in character ?

* * *

The falsity of the accusations of cruelty brought against the Belgian population is more especially demonstrated by the statements of the Arch-Priest Kaufmann in his letter of September 28th, 1914, to the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, and by the inquiry made at Aix-la-Chapelle by Dr. Van der Goort, Red Cross doctor at Maestricht, an account of which was given by the Hague *Nieuwe Courant* in its issue of October 20th, 1914.

Herr Kaufmann in particular writes in his letter of September 28th, which was published in the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* of September 30th: "I have received the following written statement from the head doctor of one of the hospitals here (Aix-la-Chapelle), who is also a famous oculist: 'In no hospital in Aix-la-Chapelle is there a ward filled with wounded men whose eyes have been put out. As far as I know, not a single case of the kind has been notified at Aix-la-Chapelle.'" (See also the second Belgian Grey Book, Document 108.)

We must also reproduce the following passage from a long letter which appeared in the same paper on August 20th, 1914 (No. 738). The author is a chaplain in the German army, Dr. Christ:—

"During the ten days I spent in this part of Belgium I myself found several wounded men in private houses. All, without exception, told me they had been tended as if they had been members of the family. I heard the same thing from our wounded in the Liège hospitals. I paid visits wherever I heard that there were German wounded, and I went to each man, Catholics and Protestants alike. Several of them certainly said that they had been wounded by shots fired from houses, but not a single one of the wounded to whom I spoke—and I saw several hundreds—told me he had been mutilated or ill-treated after he had been wounded. Several, indeed, said that those who were the first to carry them from the battlefield to the hospitals were Belgians.

"I have thought it my duty to record these facts concerning our wounded in Belgium and to complete or rectify the ideas and opinions of Belgium and its inhabitants that obtain among us. Cruelties and crimes, attacks upon Red Cross ambulances, mutilations and wounds are unhappily facts and cannot be denied. But when we compare the number of the victims with that of the German wounded who have been saved by the helpful kindness of Belgian families, Belgian nuns, Belgian ladies and Belgian doctors, we recognise that the proportion of the former to the latter is far smaller than has hitherto been supposed in Germany."

No doubt Dr. Christ was prevented by prejudice from giving the lie outright to all the accusations he heard formulated around him, in spite of the evidence of his own eyes. But he is at least of opinion that the cruelties committed by the population were exceptional, and, personally, he never saw or talked to any mutilated or cruelly-treated wounded soldier.

The Dutch newspaper *De Tijd*, for its part, published in its No. 20447 of November 13th, 1914, the speech made by Oberstabsarzt (Staff Surgeon) Müller at Liège, on the occasion of the closing, early in October, of the Belgian Red Cross ambulance organised in the buildings of the College of Saint-Servais at Liège by the Jesuit Fathers, in which from 500 to 600 wounded had been treated. The doctor admitted in his address that when he received orders to go to Liège, he felt some uneasiness at first, on account of all the evil attributed to the Belgian population by the German newspapers. But his prejudices were soon dissipated, and he could not refrain from paying his tribute to the entire staff of the hospital, who had tended all the wounded, friends and foes alike, with the most cordial kindness. He would retain, added the doctor, a most pleasant recollection of his sojourn at Liège and of his relations with the Jesuit Fathers and with his Belgian colleagues. The Dutch newspaper remarks that this testimony on the part of Dr. Müller, who stayed three months at Liège, is certainly of value, and that it constitutes a fresh refutation of all the calumnies heaped upon the Belgian people.*

* * *

Numerous contradictions of the allegations imputing atrocities to the Belgian population have appeared in the German press itself. We may note more especially

* See also on this subject the *Indépendance Belge* (published in London) of January 26th, 1915, and p. 295 of the present volume.

the articles published in the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, No. 852, on September 30th, 1914; No. 859, on October 2nd, 1914; No. 880, on October 10th, 1914; No. 931, on October 28th, 1914; No. 970, on November 10th, 1914; No. 1022, on November 27th, 1914, etc.; in the *Bayerischer Kurier*, No. 269, on September 26th, 1914; No. 274, on October 1st, 1914; No. 290, on October 17th, 1914; No. 14, on January 14th, 1915, etc.; in the *Münchener Tageblatt* of September 20th, 1914, and of January 1st, 1915, etc.; in the *Vorwärts*, on December 6th, 1914; in the *Echo der Gegenwart* (Aix-la-Chapelle), on October 26th, 1914; and in the *Volksfreund* (Aix-la-Chapelle), on November 5th, 1914, French edition, etc.

The newspapers of Aix-la-Chapelle—the first town the traveller reaches after crossing the Prusso-Belgian frontier—were among the first to protest against the infamies imputed to the Belgian population. We must also note the honest and sensible attitude adopted from the first on this subject by the *Vorwärts* of Berlin. Some of the articles in this paper are veritable acts of reparation towards the civil inhabitants of Belgium. It will be observed that they speak with just severity of the soldiers who spread tales of atrocities in Germany, some of them without realising the terrible results of their boastings, others acting from ulterior motives.

We append an article on the subject from *L'Ami du Peuple* (a bi-lingual edition, issued specially for Belgium, of the Aix-la-Chapelle *Volksfreund*) of November 15th, 1914. It is entitled: *Impartial Testimony. Atrocities of the War*:—

“Some time ago certain newspapers made themselves the medium for stories of alleged atrocities committed on the persons of wounded Germans by the civil populations of France and Belgium.

“The *Vorwärts*, the leading Socialist organ of Berlin, has just published an article on this subject, in which it seeks to demonstrate the falsity of such assertions, and at the same time to show the disastrous influence they are calculated to exercise on the minds of the German people.

“The war correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt*,” says the article in particular, “spoke a few weeks ago of cigars and cigarettes filled with gunpowder, and given or sold to our soldiers with diabolical intentions. He even asserted that he had seen hundreds of cigarettes of this kind with his own eyes. We are assured from an authoritative source that these stories of cigars and cigarettes are nothing but audacious inventions. Moreover, stories of soldiers whose eyes have been put out by *francs-tireurs* are circulating throughout Germany. Now so far not a single case of the kind has been officially recorded. Hitherto, every time it has been possible to test such a story, its inaccuracy has been demonstrated.

“It matters little that rumours of this kind have an appearance of absolute certainty or that they are even supported by alleged *eye-witnesses*. Love of notoriety, lack of critical acumen, and personal error play a disastrous part in the times through which we are now living. Every nose that has been blown off or merely bandaged, and every eye that has been destroyed is immediately transformed into a nose or an eye removed by *francs-tireurs*. The *Kölnische Volkszeitung* has already been able to prove that, in spite of very precise assertions from Aix-la-Chapelle, no blinded soldier is to be found in any of the hospitals of the town. It has also been reported that wounded men injured in this way were under treatment in the neighbourhood of Berlin; but wherever inquiry has been made into these rumours their complete baselessness has been demonstrated.

“We cannot but applaud the impartial attitude of the great German Socialist paper. The present war entails so many actual horrors that newspapers, of whatever nationality they may be, should refrain from further exasperating public opinion, already at fever-pitch, in the belligerent countries, by stories at once gruesome and fanciful.”

Under the title *Die Wahrheit bricht sich Bahn* (Truth making its way), the *Echo der Gegenwart* of Aix-la-Chapelle, published the following on October 28th, 1914, No. 253, 2nd sheet:—

“In the review, *Zeit im Bild*, war edition, Year 12, No. 38, published by Pass and Garleb, Berlin W. 57, there is a war study entitled: *On the way to Brussels. At Liège*. In connection with Liège, it says:—

“When collecting the dead and wounded on the battlefields in front of the forts, we recognised the horrible fact that many of the inhabitants had behaved in a truly bestial manner to our defenceless wounded. Not only had they cut off the fingers of the victims of the fighting to get their rings, but they had mutilated them in an indescribable fashion. When houses were searched for arms, rings and watches that had belonged to our soldiers were found in the possession of women

and men ; a priest was also arrested who had strung a number of rings on a cord, and was wearing them round his neck. These inhuman creatures were taken as prisoners to the Chartreuse fortress. All of them have been sentenced to death. Every day several of them are executed. One can feel no pity for such people.'

"In this connection the Imperial Government at Liège has written to *Par Informationen* : 'It seems highly improbable that a priest should have been guilty of such acts as those described above, and nothing is known of anything of the sort here. The other statements are also false or exaggerated. Moreover, no executions have taken place in the Chartreuse fort so far.'"

In the same paper and the same No. 253 of October 28th, 1914, 2nd sheet, there is another article entitled : *Blinded Soldiers*. This is the text :—

"Having heard stories and rumours calculated to make one's hair stand on end (*haarsträubenden*), spread abroad mainly by soldiers in the neighbourhood of Aix-la-Chapelle, a candidate for a high-class teacher's certificate went to the Municipal Ophthalmic Institution of Aix-la-Chapelle in the Stephan Strasse, where, it was said, twenty-eight blinded soldiers were lying in the so-called Ward of the Dead (*Totensaal*). He writes as follows on the subject to the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* : 'On Monday, October 19th, I presented myself to the Superintendent of the clinic in question, Dr. Büllers. 'Good,' he said ; 'I will show you the tragic ward.' He opened the door of a ward. All was well with the patients. We visited a second and then a third ward. 'Is anyone in pain ?' 'No, doctor.' Finally a door was opened into a room where the light filtered through dark curtains. Click ! The electric light was turned on ! 'Does that hurt your eyes ?' 'No, doctor.' 'Did they put out your eyes in Belgium ?' The wounded laughed aloud. We went through all the wards. Cases of wounded men who had lost both eyes were extremely rare. 'Well now,' said the amiable superintendent, 'if you intend to publish what you have seen, say that so far I and my colleague, Dr. Thier, have not attended a single soldier whose eyes have been put out.'"

"To give themselves importance and make themselves interesting, soldiers coming back from the battlefield often tell the most improbable stories, which, however, are unhappily repeated and believed. We ourselves recently brought a similar case to the notice of the garrison Commandant of Aix-la-Chapelle, a case we only refrained from publishing in the interest of religious peace.

"It is only by taking the severest measures against such scandalous offences (*Unfug*), no matter where they are publicly committed, that the desired result can be obtained. The most flagrant (*krasse*) cases should be immediately denounced to the authorities, the names of the offenders being given, etc."

It is hardly possible to meet the odious allegations of the "White Book" with more striking contradictions than those offered by these newspapers of the frontier town of Aix-la-Chapelle, where there were certainly greater opportunities for learning what had happened in Belgium than anywhere else in Germany : wounded men coming back directly from the Belgian battlefields were, in fact, treated there in considerable numbers from the very first days of the war.

* * *

The Dutch newspaper, *De Tijd*, for its part, reproducing in its issue of October 27th, 1914, No. 20, 430, an article from the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, dismisses the stories of soldiers whose eyes have been put out in Belgium as ancient myths (*oude Fabel*). *De Tijd* records in this connection the statement of a Bonn oculist, Privy Councillor Professor Kuhnt, who declares that he had not encountered a single case of this kind in his clinic, whereas a certain individual had spread the story that he had himself seen from twenty to thirty soldiers there who had lost their sight in this way. Dr. Kuhnt adds, on the other hand, that he had seen several soldiers who had been blinded as a result of wounds caused either by bullets or exploding bombs.

The Superintendents of the great Hospital of Charity at Berlin have declared that "there are no cases of wounded men whose eyes have been put out under treatment at the Charity." The *Vorwärts* of December 6th, 1914, which contains this declaration, further publishes the following statement, addressed to this newspaper in answer to an inquiry it had made, by the superintendents of an ambulance at Hanover : "From inquiries made among all the doctors of our subordinate sections of Reserve, Hospital III., we find that there are no wounded men whose eyes have been put out under treatment here, nor have there ever been any such." The *Vorwärts* sums up as follows : "We can therefore only state emphatically that of all the numerous cases of this kind attested in the most positive manner (*mit aller Bestimmtheit*), not a single one has been established."

The superintendents of a hospital at Frankfort also declared that no soldier whose eyes had been put out had come under their care.

Finally, two official Commissions, one civil, the other military, which, according to information received, were appointed in Germany in the autumn of 1914 to inquire into acts of cruelty ascribed to belligerents, arrived at similar conclusions, though they acted quite independently. The civil Commission is said to have stated that there were no proofs that Belgian women had put out the eyes of the wounded, that no incident of the kind had been officially established, and that, in general, acts of cruelty had been grossly exaggerated. The conclusions of the military Commission did not differ materially from those of the civil Commission.

Whatever may be said as to the accuracy of this information, the Imperial Foreign Office, when drawing up the indictment which figures on p. 4 of the "White Book," ignored the conclusions of the two Commissions, just as it ignored the absolutely incontestable declarations of the oculists and medical superintendents of German hospitals. Regardless of equity, the "White Book" deals in general accusations without reservation, with the object of creating the impression that the Belgian population, as a whole, indulged in abominable acts.

Further, with regard to the odious imputation of having blinded the wounded, so irresponsibly laid upon the Belgian population, we know that the "White Book" contains no single deposition made by any victim of such an act.* True, a certain number of private soldiers and even an officer (App. C 78) declare that they saw wounded men and corpses mutilated in this fashion. But if we refer to the authoritative testimony reproduced above, there is reason to believe that their prepossessions led them astray. It must be pointed out that the eyes of dead soldiers which looked as if they had been put out may well have been destroyed by wounds or by that rapid decomposition common under the scorching heat of the summer sun; or they may even have been picked out by certain birds that settle upon battlefields. The Belgian population has the more right to invoke the benefit of the doubt on this point, inasmuch as the slanderous character of the accusations brought against it in connection with wounded soldiers has been demonstrated by all the German medical authorities who are qualified to pronounce an opinion on the subject.

Similar errors have no doubt arisen as to the apparently inexplicable origin of other injuries (missing limbs, contusions of various kinds, etc.).

* * *

The German Jesuit Father, Duhr, in his pamphlet: *Der Lügengeist im Völkerkrieg*† (Mendacity in the International War) expresses himself as follows on this particular point: "It is quite evident, in connection with the putting out of eyes, that a perfect mania for seeing atrocities on every hand (*Greuelsucht*) spread throughout the country. Innumerable tales of horror of this description were recounted, hawked about, and finally guaranteed as absolutely authentic—and yet they were all nothing but fables!" (p. 11). The author of the pamphlet records, *inter alia*, that, according to an article in the *Kölnische Zeitung* of October 3rd, 1914, a story was current at Aix-la-Chapelle of a boy of ten years old who had been surprised on a Belgian battlefield carrying a pail full of the eyes of soldiers! (p. 16).

Father Duhr made it his business to classify the legends of *francs-tireurs*' activities and atrocities, and to bring into relief a certain number of recurrent types among the mass of stories repeated. He notes more especially the legend of the blinding of soldiers by Belgian civilians, especially by women and children; that of the poisoning of German soldiers; that of the cutting off of fingers; that of priests firing upon the German troops with machine guns installed in their belfries. Father Duhr gives several examples of each type of these legends, pointing out the amplifications and perversions they underwent in the course of their oral or written transmission. In each case, whatever the apparent authenticity of the legend, the author of the pamphlet meets the alleged facts by contradictions emanating from

* All we find on this subject is an accusation made by an anonymous soldier, whose corps and branch of the service are not mentioned, in App. 54. This accusation is reported by the Reservist Weisse in the following terms: "Take me away," the mutilated soldier is supposed to have said, "they have just put out both my eyes." So vague is Weisse's deposition that no verification of the incident, neither the place nor the date of which is specified, would be possible (see Monseigneur Rutten's letter to Baron von Bissing, p. 348).

† Published by Manz, Munich and Ratisbon, January, 1915.

the military authorities themselves as a result of inquiries solicited by the Catholic apologist Association, *Pax*.*

The "White Book" does not examine the value of the contradictions given in Germany itself to the accusations it formulates. It makes no allusion to them, and affects to be ignorant of them, though it is well acquainted with them. Indeed, as is mentioned above, a certain number of the inquiries asked for by the *Pax* Association were made under the direction or through the medium of the Military Bureau of Inquiry, installed at the Prussian War Office. This is demonstrated by the fact that several of the reports and official contradictions published in *Pax Informationen* are signed "Bauer" and "Wagner," the very names that figure in the "White Book" at the end of the four general reports on occurrences at Aerschot, Andenne, Dinant and Louvain.

In face of all these authoritative contradictions, what weight can be attached to the lucubrations of a Baldeweg, a Voigt, a Koch, a Westerkamp,† to which the compilers of the "White Book" have not hesitated to give official sanction?

Moreover, the Belgian Episcopate, in a collective letter addressed to the German and Austro-Hungarian Episcopate on November 24th, 1915, declared it knew and would swear that "the impudent accusations of the Imperial Government were calumnies from beginning to end" (see p. 351 of the present volume).

SECTION III.

THE PARTICIPATION OF BELGIAN PRIESTS IN HOSTILITIES.

With regard to the accusations brought at the beginning of the war against the Belgian clergy in particular, the question may be said to have been completely elucidated before the publication of the "White Book."

On the one hand, the German authorities did not venture openly to put obstacles in the way of the inquiries instituted by the Belgian Episcopate with a view to establishing the truth, and although they made unsuccessful efforts to stifle the voice of Cardinal Mercier, Primate of Belgium, they did not succeed in so doing. His pastoral letter of Christmas, 1914, was soon widely read not only in Belgium but in foreign countries. The same may be said of the protest of Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur, dated April 10th, 1915.‡ On the other hand, unlike the accusations against the Belgian population in general, which were accepted as true by the whole German people, the imputations specially directed against members of the clergy were not received without distrust by a section of German public opinion. Alarmed by the violence of the attacks against the Catholic religion itself that the stories spread abroad by soldiers had excited in Germany, the Catholics of that country had felt, as early as the middle of the month of August, 1914, the imperative necessity of counter-action without delay, for a new era of *Kulturkampf* seemed already about to dawn. The supreme importance of maintaining domestic peace in Germany induced the military authorities not only to accede to the requests for an inquiry addressed to them, but also to communicate the results to the interested parties, even at the risk of stultifying the telegram sent on September 4th, 1914, by the Emperor William to the President of the United States of America.§ Thus the apologist Association, *Pax*, was enabled to bring to the knowledge of the public by degrees the

* The office of the Association is at 16, Kunibertskloster, Cologne.—See the work of F. VAN LANGENHOVE, *Comment naît un Cycle de Legendes. Francs-tireurs et atrocités belges*. Paris and Lausanne, Payot, 1916.

† See App. 55, 58, 60 and D 37.

‡ See pp. 300 and 308 for the text of these two documents.—It was not until the end of December, 1915, that the Belgian Government became acquainted with the protests of the Bishops of Liège and Namur against the "White Book," which were transmitted to the Governor-General of occupied Germany in a letter of November 6th, 1915, as also with the collective letter of November 24th, 1915, addressed by the Belgian Episcopate to the Austro-German Episcopate. These documents are reproduced at the end of the present volume (pp. 322 to 362).

§ In this telegram the Emperor even went so far as to accuse the clergy of having committed cruelties upon wounded soldiers, doctors, and ambulance orderlies (see p. 45).

various items of information collected by the military authorities with regard to those episodes of the war in which, according to the first German reports received from Belgium and France, ecclesiastics had played a reprehensible part. The inquiries made, as was inevitable, served to confound the accusers.

The German apologist review, *Der Fels*,* even took upon itself to publish on p. 181 of its issue Nos. 9 and 10, of February, 1915, the following lines, signed by Herr Lorenz Müller: "No single case of firing from belfries with the connivance of priests has been officially recorded. Everything so far reported as to atrocities alleged to have been committed during this war by Catholic priests which it has been possible to test by inquiry has proved without exception to be false and, indeed, pure invention. Doubtless we shall only know after the war how we are to reconcile this fact with the passage relating to the clergy in the telegram sent by our Emperor to the President of the United States."

But more than this. A Note addressed on January 22nd, 1915, by the Prussian War Office at Berlin to the Imperial Chancellor, categorically retracted the general accusation brought against the Belgian clergy at the beginning of the war, and only retained individual and exceptional charges. This Note, which was kept secret, but which was sent to the German diplomatic missions in foreign countries to be utilised by them in furtherance of the propaganda in circles where little was known as to the real attitude of the German armies during the invasion of Belgium, was published in its entirety in *De Tijd* on March 22nd, 1915, in Dutch, and on April 12th, in German.† It was here particularly stated: "The German Government is convinced that it was above all the higher clergy of Belgium who endeavoured to bring the people to a more reasonable frame of mind and to induce them to cease these attacks." The Note adds that here and there a few priests had disregarded the duties of their position, had ranged themselves on the side of the *francs-tireurs*, had taken up arms, and had even lent themselves to espionage. It concludes: "There is no doubt that these were exceptional cases." As examples of these "exceptional cases," the Note cites only the parish priests of Hockai, Spontin, Battice and Aerschot. Now, as regards each of these, the falsity of the accusation has been demonstrated by irrefutable documents.

Further, it appears from an inquiry held in Belgium in the spring of 1915 by Abbé van den Bergh, an Austrian priest of Dutch origin long domiciled in Austria,‡ that, from the beginning of the said year, the German Government had abandoned all but sixteen well-defined cases of complaint against the Belgian clergy. These sixteen cases relate to the communes of Lincé, Battice, Barchon, Hockai, Aerschot, Pont-Brulé (Oyenbrugge), Acoz, Hougaerde, Andenne, Spontin, Bouge, Champion, Namur, Silenrieux, Relst and Etalle.

The "White Book" gives no details as to the accusations made by the German authorities against the priests of these places save in the cases of Champion (App. 36 and 37), Silenrieux (App. 39 and 40), Acoz (App. 43, 44 and 45), Hougaerde (App. 47), Aerschot (App. A 5), and Andenne (p. 107 and App. B 3).§ The majority of the testimonies in these various appendices are based upon deductions and lack precision; one-sided and interested, they have no probatory value. Only absolutely impartial inquiries could shed full light on the subject; but the German Government, as we know, has always refused to carry out the proposals made to it on several occasions to institute international Commissions of Inquiry.

In general terms the episcopal authorities of Belgium deny any participation whatever in hostilities by ecclesiastics. Refutations of the German accusations are to be found more especially in the pastoral letter of Christmas, 1914, of Cardinal Mercier, in the protests of Monseigneur Heylen and Monseigneur Rutten and in the extracts from the report of Abbé van den Bergh. The various documents are inserted in the Second and Third Parts (Appendix) of the present volume. In his pastoral letter, the Archbishop of Malines makes the following statement, *inter alia*: "Wherever it has been possible, I have questioned our people, our clergy, and particularly a considerable number of priests who had been deported to German prisons, but whom a principle of humanity, to which I gladly render homage, has since set at liberty. Well, I affirm upon my honour, and I am prepared to assert

* This fortnightly Review, the organ of the Central Bureau of Information of the German Catholic press, is published at Frankfort-on-the-Main, Niedenau, No. 24.

† This Note was also published in the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* of April 3rd, 1915.

‡ Extracts from Abbé van den Bergh's report are published on pp. 278 and 312 of the present volume.

§ The "White Book" also accuses the priest (*der Geistliche*) of Marche of having fired upon the German troops.

upon oath, that so far I have not met with a single ecclesiastic, secular or regular, who had incited civilians to bear arms against the enemy. All have loyally followed the instructions of their Bishops, given in the early days of August, to the effect that they were to use their moral influence over the civil population, so that order might be preserved and military regulations respected."

The Note of the Prussian War Office of January 22nd, 1915, further maintains that no German officer or soldier ever deliberately laid hands upon ecclesiastical property, or even upon any member of the clergy. This assertion does not figure in the "White Book." How, indeed, could it have been reconciled with the fact that 50 Belgian ecclesiastics had been massacred, and that hundreds of priests had been wounded, pursued and fired upon, set up against walls to be shot, ignominiously treated, and deported to Germany? In face of these undeniable facts, duly attested by the Belgian Episcopate, the compilers of the "White Book" evidently realised that it was impossible to reproduce the audacious statement of the Note of January 22nd.

The prefatory Note to the "White Book" formulates an accusation in general terms against the Belgian clergy, without any of the reservations contained in the Note of January 22nd, and indeed without the slightest allusion to them, declaring that men of every condition, workmen, manufacturers, doctors, professors, *even ecclesiastics*, and also women and children, were arrested with weapons in their hands (pp. 1, 2). It refrains on the other hand from making it known that after six months of investigation, the German Government was reduced to the abandonment of all but sixteen of its cases against members of the clergy, for this would have been an implicit acknowledgment of the falsity of all the other accusations.

There is indeed legitimate ground for surprise in the fact that the authors of the Note of January 22nd, 1915, and the compilers of the "White Book"—with the exception of the six introductory pages—are one and the same: the Major Bauer and Dr. Wagner already mentioned. The text of the memorandum of January 22nd is reproduced below on pp. 312 and 313.

Finally, it must be noted that the "White Book," by refraining from repeating the earlier accusations of the German Governments against Belgian priests, in which these were said to have been guilty of acts of cruelty to the wounded, recognises the falsity of the imputation contained in the Imperial telegram of September 4th, 1914.

* * *

With regard more especially to the massacre and arson at Louvain, the Report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry instituted at the Prussian War Office expresses itself as follows concerning the attitude of the clergy: "Unhappily a certain number of the clergy were so misguided as to abuse their influence over the population, and induce the inhabitants to harbour *francs-tireurs*: it is proved that some of them even took an active part in the fighting" (p. 236). Rifleman (*Musketier*) Dreher, of the 48th Regiment, declared on December 16th, 1914, that on the morning of August 26th he saw over 100 civilians, among whom were five ecclesiastics, shot in front of the railway station at Louvain for having fired upon German soldiers, or for having been found with arms in their possession (App. D 19). The Landwehr soldier Westerkamp states, and the "White Book" seriously affirms, that, according to a Belgian who spoke to him in German, the whole catastrophe might have been averted had not the clergy declared from the pulpit that those who fired upon the German troops would be eternally blessed (App. D 37, p. 300). Private Grüner, a merchant by profession, even asserts in his second deposition, made on March 19th, 1915, that a Belgian, wearing the Order of the Red Eagle, had said to him: "It is impossible to struggle against the clergy, who dominate the people entirely" (App. D 38, p. 304). Everyone knows how little truth there is in this allegation. This same soldier states in his first deposition that a great number of the Belgians he interrogated told him the priests had represented resistance to Germany as a matter of faith (*Glaubenssache*) (p. 302). Lieutenant Kurt Brandt says that two ecclesiastics had been shot because they had distributed ammunition to civilians (App. D 48).—The Report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry concerning events at Dinant also declares that ecclesiastics took part in the armed resistance to the German troops (p. 122).—As to the "rising" at Andenne, the Report of the Military Bureau (p. 107) asserts, as do also Major von Polentz (App. B 2) and Private Roleff (App. B 3) that the signal for this was given by a peal of bells, which suddenly rang out from the church tower. Roleff even declares

he heard from German families by whom he was nursed at Andenne—and who, we may note in passing, apparently remained unmolested in Belgium after the outbreak of war, like many other Germans—that the whole attack was a pre-arranged affair and that the clergy had given the necessary instructions (*Verhaltensmassregeln*) from the pulpit. We may point out that this deposition was made at Berlin on December 5th, 1914, that is to say, three days before the statement of Lieutenant-Colonel von Eulwege, given below.—At Aerschot, according to Captain Folz (App. A 5), two ecclesiastics at least were seized with weapons in their hands in the course of the searches which were made in the houses.

These stories, unanimously and vigorously denied by Belgian witnesses, are again contradicted, at least as regards Louvain and Andenne, by categorical German declarations. Dr. Sonnenschein, of München-Gladbach, came to Louvain in the early days of September, 1914, in the company of two Dutchmen. The special object of Dr. Sonnenschein's journey was to establish the truth as to the part ascribed to the Catholic clergy by certain German newspapers. On September 10th the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* published an article signed by him containing, among other things, such statements as the following: "It would be unjust to implicate the University and clergy of Louvain. The students were away for the vacation, and also the majority of the professors: those who remained devoted themselves to the care of the wounded, German as well as Belgian. As to the priests and monks, far from stirring up the inhabitants, they exhorted them incessantly to be calm. Moreover, no weapons were found in any church, nor were shots fired from any church tower." There are certainly no grounds for suspecting Dr. Sonnenschein of excessive sympathy with or prepossessions in favour of Belgium. Was it not he who in a fly-sheet inserted in this same Cologne newspaper on September 5th falsely attributed to Monseigneur Coenraets, Vice-Rector of the University of Louvain, a confession of the guilt of the Louvain population, and permitted the repeated contradictions of this statement by the ecclesiastic to remain unknown to the German public to this day? This attitude on the part of Dr. Sonnenschein gives additional weight to his assertions concerning the University and clergy of Louvain (see also p. 227). But more than this, one of the principal witnesses of the sack of Louvain, Major von Manteuffel, in an interview of October, 1914, completely exculpated the clergy of Louvain. As to the supposed share of the clergy in the "rising" at Andenne, Lieutenant-Colonel von Eulwege wrote as follows on December 8th, 1914, from Namur to the ecclesiastical Association *Pax*: "My very careful personal investigations among a great variety of persons did not furnish the slightest reason to suppose that the parish priest of Andenne incited the population to take part in street fighting."†

* * *

As has been said above, the attitude of the Belgian clergy at the time when the German troops invaded Belgian territory and took possession of it in August and September, 1914, was thoroughly elucidated by the inquiry conducted in Belgium by the Abbé van den Bergh. This inquiry was undertaken on behalf of a Viennese ecclesiastical Association, analogous to the German Bureau of Ecclesiastical Defence, *Pax*. Having had an opportunity of examining the Note mentioned above as drawn up by the Prussian War Office and dated January 22nd, 1915, Abbé van den Bergh undertook the task of examining its assertions, in spite of the difficulties put in his way by the German authorities. His conclusions completely exonerate the Belgian clergy from the charges brought against them. (See pp. 312 to 316.)

While proclaiming the innocence of the clergy, the conclusions of Abbé van den Bergh also exculpate the mass of the Belgian civil population from the charge of having committed hostile acts against the German troops; the clergy and the population were indeed, in the majority of cases, accused at the same time and of the same acts by the same German witnesses, whose authority is now destroyed. The same conclusion emerges from the inquiries which were made by the German military authorities at the request of the *Pax* Association. This Association,

* One of the contradictions sent to the press by Monseigneur Coenraets, none of which were published in Germany, appeared in the issue of March 30th, 1915, of the Dutch newspaper *De Tijd*. The text is reproduced below, p. 69.

† Dr. Bachem, editor of the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, the principal German Catholic organ, recognises, for his part, the utter absurdity of all the accusations against the Belgian clergy which it had been possible to examine, in a study on the *Religious Problem in Belgium* published in the *Süd-deutsche Monatsheft* for April 1915 (p. 35).

when it set them in motion, was no doubt actuated exclusively by sectarian motives ; but without its volition, and perhaps even contrary to its secret desires, these inquiries, which their initiators would fain have confined to the attitude of the clergy, had, by the force of circumstances, results, the effects of which went far beyond the goal in view of which they were undertaken. When the story of an action performed in common is disproved, all who have participated in it are involved, and the clergy cannot be exonerated without exculpating the laity. This conclusion presents itself to the mind with peculiar force when we remember that the priests are generally represented in the statements of German military witnesses as the *leaders of the crowd*, whose patriotic fanaticism they are supposed to have excited even from the pulpit.

SECTION IV.

VIOLATIONS OF THE ARTICLES OF THE GENEVA CONVENTION (RED CROSS).

The "White Book" reproaches the "Belgian population" with "bestial" conduct to the German wounded, and contraventions of Article 1, paragraph 1, of the Geneva Convention of July 6th, 1906 ; they are accused more particularly of having fired unhesitatingly upon the German troops under cover of this emblem, and of having attacked ambulances containing wounded and the medical staff in the discharge of its duty (p. 4). At Dinant, among other places, they are said to have fired upon the Germans from buildings on which the Red Cross flag was flying (p. 122). At Louvain, the infuriated populace is said to have fired upon doctors, sick persons, wounded, and even an ambulance (p. 235).

The universal propagation of such calumnies really passes all bounds : the "White Book," in fact, incriminates "the population of Belgium," and brings a general accusation, as if the whole of the population, or at least a very considerable portion of it, had been guilty of such crimes.

No one, of course, is in a position to deny positively that there may have been at some point of Belgian territory an excited person, who so far lost his senses or his self-control as deliberately to attack ambulances and medical attendants, though such actions seem really almost incredible. But the Belgian Government can affirm in the most categorical manner that the Belgian Commission of Inquiry has no more knowledge of incidents of this kind than of acts of hostility committed by civilians against the German troops, or acts of cruelty to the German wounded.

The compilers of the "White Book" promulgate their accusations without the slightest respect for justice. Thus they have not thought it their duty to discriminate between accidents due to ill-directed fire, which must necessarily arise in the course of fighting, and the crimes which they lay to the charge of the Belgian population. No trace of this elementary respect for justice is to be found, at any rate, either in the extracts from military reports and depositions which they reproduce, or in any one of the four general Reports of the Military Bureau of Inquiry, or, finally, in the prefatory Note drawn up by the Imperial Foreign Office.

* * *

The Belgian Government declares unhesitatingly that the articles of the Geneva Convention have been scrupulously observed in Belgium.

From the beginning of hostilities the Minister of the Interior was indeed careful to remind the population of the respect due to the wounded, and to define the functions of the Red Cross Society. The circular sent by M. Berryer to all the communal authorities in the country on August 4th, 1914, contains the following passage on this subject : "The inhabitants will be performing a patriotic and humanitarian duty by giving succour to the wounded during and after battle as far as possible. The communal authorities will make every effort to organise such assistance in concert with the doctors and assistants of the Red Cross Society. No opposition must be offered to the use of public buildings as

hospitals, when this is necessary. The buildings occupied by the wounded must be respected by all combatants, but the abuse of the insignia of the Red Cross is strictly forbidden. These insignia consist of a red cross on a white flag or armlet.”*

Thousands of German soldiers have been tended in Belgian hospitals and private houses with all the solicitude and respect evoked in kindly hearts by the spectacle of human suffering. The letter of the German army chaplain, Dr. Christ, to the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, an extract from which we have reproduced above (p. 51), bears witness to this; the same may be said of the testimony of Oberstabsarzt (Staff Surgeon) Müller, also reproduced above (p. 51). Professor Körte of Berlin and other German doctors confirm their statements. Staff-Surgeon Major Professor Stuertz, on August 31, 1914, even offered the thanks of the German Government to the members of the Belgian Red Cross Society for “the devoted care they bestowed on all the wounded brought into the capital.” Indeed, the fact is so well known that it is almost superfluous to mention it.

The compilers of the “White Book” probably feared to attenuate the probatory force of their arguments by paying homage to truth on this point, after having denounced the “bestial conduct of the Belgian population.” German official writers refrained from any such tribute, though the opportunity of manifesting some slight sense of justice offered itself to them here quite naturally.

The German Government has, indeed, never maintained that it was because German soldiers did not receive necessary care in Belgian hospitals that they ceased to entrust their wounded to these charitable institutions, save in a few cases, and that they removed those who were under treatment in them as early as the end of September, 1914. May we not conclude that the reason for this behaviour, the result of which was to deprive the German wounded, although so numerous, of the succour offered them with so much goodwill and devotion, was that the German Government feared to be embarrassed by the protests of its own soldiers in the campaign of calumny it had undertaken in order to justify the crime of having put whole regions of Belgium to fire and sword? Getting the better of their early prejudices, the majority of the German wounded did not fail, in fact, to express the warmest gratitude for the care bestowed on them in Belgian hospitals. Some of them, when transferred to German hospitals, installed in Belgium by the German authorities, even complained that they were less kindly treated in these than in the Belgian hospitals; others, before they left, deputed one of their number to express their gratitude to the Belgian staff in a farewell speech.† A great many of the wounded did not conceal their aversion to the young German military doctors, often brutal and ignorant men, whose arrogant behaviour to the doctors and staff of the Belgian hospitals frequently roused their indignation. It is only right, however, to acknowledge that the medical corps of the German army, which comprised various distinguished representatives of the medical profession, contained men with a lofty conception of their duties, who, as a general rule, behaved correctly.‡

Gradually, as the Belgian hospitals closed for lack of wounded to tend, and as orders were given to remove the tutelary sign of the Red Cross from the buildings which had sheltered them, a staff of German orderlies and nurses arrived from Germany, while the military authorities requisitioned the stores and appliances of many Belgian hospitals. At the same time several German newspapers hinted that nothing, or practically nothing, had been done in Belgium for the relief of wounded soldiers.§

* See the complete text of the circular, p. 289 of the present volume.

† See the work of J. Massart, Professor of Brussels University, entitled *Comment les Belges résistent à la domination allemande*, p. 121-124 (Payot & Co., Paris, 1916).

‡ In a letter dated December 19th, 1915, the Belgian army doctor, Watry, in particular writes: “If we had reason to complain of exactions and insolence, often of a revolting nature, on the part of members of the German medical staffs who succeeded each other at the hospital of Antwerp, I am bound to say that this complaint does not apply in any way to the naval doctors under whose orders we were during the first two months.”

§ The publication, *Kriegsärztliche Vorträge* (Army Medical Lectures, Gustav Fischer, Jena, 1915), having reproduced a lecture given at Berlin by Dr. Mamlock, under the title *Die Deutsche Medizinische Verwaltung in Belgien* (German Medical Administration in Belgium), Dr. Depage, Professor at the Brussels University, and Chief Medical Officer of the Belgian Army, dealt with certain allegations contained in this lecture in a letter to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. As this letter confirms and formulates a certain number of the opinions put forward above, the text of the protest made by Dr. Depage, one of the most distinguished of our Belgian surgeons, has been inserted on pp. 298 *et seq.* of the present volume.

A few articles praising the Belgian doctors and recognising the services rendered to the German wounded by the Belgian Red Cross appeared, however, in the press of the Empire.* Only a complete misconception of the mentality of German official writers could lead one to expect equal honesty on their part; the "White Book" confines itself to invective. Is it not designed to impress the minds of nations who are taking no part in the conflict, and to fill them with indignation against the Belgian murderers and mutilators of the wounded?

* * *

As to the respect shown by the German troops to the articles of the Geneva Convention, the Belgian Commission of Inquiry has recorded a number of incidents, some of which are noted below.

On Wednesday, August 12th, 1914, after the fighting at Haelen, German infantrymen finished off Major van Damme, who was lying face downwards, severely wounded, by firing a revolver into his mouth.

On August 9th, at Orsmael, the Germans picked up Major Knapen, who was seriously wounded; they set him up against a tree and fired at him till he was dead; they then slashed his corpse with a sword.

At various places, notably at Hollogne-sur-Geer, at Barchon, at Pontisse, at Haelen and at Zelk, the German troops fired on doctors, ambulance orderlies, field hospitals and ambulance vehicles.

On August 16th French soldiers who had been wounded the day before at Dinant, were found with their heads battered in by the butt-ends of rifles.

On August 18th, 26 Belgian wounded and prisoners were shot at Aerschot.

On August 23rd, at Namur, German soldiers, after bringing out the German wounded, killed four wounded soldiers (two Frenchmen and two Belgians), who had been treated in Dr. Briboisia's nursing home, transformed into a hospital; they then set fire to the building.

On August 25th, in the course of the afternoon, a nurse who was tending the wounded at Eppeghem, saw a German soldier finish off a Belgian soldier, who was slightly wounded in the face, by striking him on the head with the butt-end of his rifle.

On August 16th, 1914, on the road between Tirlemont and Hannut, a group of stretcher-bearers was attacked by the Germans and fired upon. There were no combatants among them, and no mistake was possible.

On August 19th ambulance orderlies, wearing clerical costume and the Red Cross armlet, were fired upon by German troops at Aerschot as they were picking

* With regard more especially to the Belgian Red Cross Society, we may call attention to a communication from Professor Dr. Bickel, entitled *On a Belgian Battlefield*, which appeared in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of September 24, 1914. This communication contains the following passages:—"The wounded were taken to a large school belonging to the Ursuline nuns. The Sisters, among whom there were a few Germans, tended the wounded with devotion. The great majority of these wounded were German officers and soldiers; this time, however, we had also to give medical aid to a considerable number of Belgians. As soon as their wounds were dressed, when they were in a condition to bear transport, the sufferers were taken directly to the military hospitals of Brussels by the large motor ambulances of the Belgian Red Cross Society; these hospitals are placed under German administration and have a staff of German doctors. Thus everything is really perfectly (*vorzüglich*) organised for the care of the wounded; the proximity of Brussels with its great resources and its ambulances facilitates the medical service most wonderfully. . . . The extreme density of the population of Belgium, where towns and villages succeed each other almost uninterruptedly on the main highways, and where farms are scattered everywhere over the meadow lands, as well as the existence in the rural districts of a large number of schools under the direction of nuns, which are now without exception transformed into hospitals, make it possible to transport the wounded (to their great advantage) rapidly from the battlefield to permanent buildings, where they are very comfortable (*wo sie gut aufgehoben sind*). There are, further, such a superabundance of ambulances established here *ad hoc*, that all that is required to work them is the despatch of a sufficient medical staff. Thus our field ambulance columns are not under the necessity of undertaking the task of adapting houses (always a somewhat complicated business), in order to have temporary hospitals ready for use. The more mobile formations, such as the ambulance corps, are those more especially suited to conditions in the Belgian theatre of war; when they are supplemented by a park of motor ambulances, like that placed at our disposal in such an exemplary manner (*in vorbildlicher Weise*) by the Belgian Red Cross Society, they constitute an organisation as perfectly adapted to their purpose as can be imagined." The *Vossische Zeitung* of September 20th, 1914, moreover, publishes an article with the signature of Staff-Colonel Professor Dr. Lennhof, entitled *Germany in Belgium*, in which the following sentence occurs *inter alia*: "Coming to our help, the Belgian Red Cross Society placed its motor ambulances at our disposal, after battles, and very often itself undertook the transport (*Unterbringung*) of the wounded to hospital."

up the wounded, although they showed their badges. One of them was subsequently ill-treated all day in the hospital while he was tending the wounded.

On the same day at Lovenjoul, the Germans tore off the armlets of three ambulance orderlies, whom they arrested, struck, and abused. When they were finally released and were carrying away a wounded man, they were obliged to set down the stretcher seven times, because the Germans were training machine guns upon them. One of the orderlies was wounded in the thigh by a bullet.

On August 23rd, 1914, on leaving the village of Bioul, near Namur, the Belgian ambulance column, under the orders of Senior Surgeon Petit, was attacked by the enemy and came under heavy fire. Dr. Petit was wounded and also an assistant surgeon, named Snouck. The orderlies were dispersed.

On August 26th, about 3 o'clock, on the road between Werchter and Haecht, a motor-car with the Red Cross flag, which was conveying three wounded men, was attacked by the Germans; a number of shots were fired. A bullet went through the body of the car and pierced the legs of two of the wounded men inside.

The hospitals of Heyst-op-den Berg and Malines were not respected by the German troops who bombarded these places, though the Red Cross flag was flown conspicuously on the buildings.

On September 27th the Germans, in defiance of Article 14 of the Geneva Convention, captured an ambulance vehicle, after killing the two horses and wounding a stretcher-bearer whom they took prisoner.

They had already captured a hospital section of the 2nd Army Division at Haelen, and at Liège they held up two hospital trains.* Statements as to the treatment inflicted on Belgian military doctors at the beginning of the war are to be found in the Second Belgian Grey Book, Documents 92 to 97.

Among the irregularities of a less serious character frequently committed by German officers, we may note the temporary use of motor-cars (which had not been requisitioned by the Belgian authorities because they had been placed at the disposal of the Red Cross Society), for services of a purely military character, such as the transport of officers or of military messages to places at a distance. One car of the kind, forcibly diverted from the work for which it was intended, was never returned, an officer who had taken a fancy to it having appropriated it; after a week of persistent requests for its restoration, another car of no value and in very bad repair was given in exchange (see *The Germans at Louvain*, by Hervé de Gruben, p. 131).†

The army doctor Watry further writes, on December 19th, 1915: "One of the first acts of the German authorities at Antwerp was to carry off from the hospital and send to a destination unknown to me, nearly the whole stock of instruments in the hospital. Theoretically, the Geneva Convention authorises the requisitioning of surgical appliances in hospitals. But in practice this procedure was incorrect, I might almost say inhuman, for it disregarded the exigencies of the treatment of the wounded, which was thus rendered very difficult for several days. We understood the trick of legerdemain practised upon us when we saw a new stock of appliances arriving at the hospital, requisitioned at the expense of the town for the needs of the hospital, which was bare of everything of the sort (for a very good reason!).

"Among the appliances taken from the hospital there were instruments which were the private property of Dr. Chevalier van Havre and of myself. Our assertions to this effect failed to convince our gentlemen of our ownership, and the said instruments were considered part of the hospital equipment."

* * *

At the beginning of the war it was necessary to make certain German officers understand that the ambulances installed by the Belgian Red Cross Society, whose statutes merely confirm the fundamental and uniform principles of the international Red Cross Society, are in virtue of this under the safeguard of the Red Cross flag, and have the same right to the respect and protection of all belligerents as the German Red Cross establishments.

* Most of the incidents described above are contained in the 7th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry into the violation of the rules of international law and the laws and usages of war.

† This evidence was confirmed before the Commission of Inquiry by Monseigneur Deploige, President of the Institut Léon XIII. at Louvain.

A report by Father Goovaerts, the Superior of the Monastery of the Sacré-Cœur at Aerschot, who lived in the town from the moment when the German troops entered it until the day when he was carried off to prison in Germany, together with twenty-one other priests and monks, paints in particularly vivid colours the mentality of certain German officers with regard to the respect due to Red Cross institutions.

On August 19th, in the morning, German troops entered the monastery, which had been converted into a hospital, duly registered under the ægis of the Belgian Red Cross Society. Some Belgian wounded were there. Although the main door over which the flag of the Geneva Convention was flying stood open, the German soldiers broke in the lateral doors with hatchets. They invaded the wards with fixed bayonets, preceded by officers, revolver in hand, on the pretext that Belgian officers and soldiers were concealed there. They ordered the bandages of the wounded to be removed, and themselves tore them off, saying openly: "We care nothing for the Belgian Red Cross Society."

The staff of the hospital, priests, friars and laymen, with certain civilians arrested outside, were ranged along the façade to be shot. The order, however, was not carried out, though some bullets fired in the direction of the hospital killed three civilians. The hospital staff succeeded in escaping, while the soldiers took possession of the building, and fired their rifles at random; flying through the streets of the town under a lively fire, they took refuge in the civil hospital.

In the evening the attendants returned to their posts in the monastery, where a large number of civilian victims were placed under their care; these were visited regularly by a German doctor, whose conduct was all that could be desired.

On the 22nd or 23rd of August a new and very numerous troop of German soldiers was billeted in the monastery, in spite of the Father Superior's protests. The officers indulged in an orgy. Hundreds of empty bottles were found in the corridor. Further on, the witness says that the German officers quartered in the monastery made use of the house as an observation-post. The priests who had been carried off to Germany were sent back to Belgium on December 20th. On the 19th German passports were given to them, but the authorities refused to return their papers, notably those which set forth their status as Red Cross officials.*

* * *

The small respect of the German authorities for the letter and spirit of the Geneva Convention has found its latest and most flagrant manifestation in the dissolution, pronounced on April 14th, 1915, of the managing committee of the Belgian Red Cross Society, and the sequestration of the property and archives of the association. This arbitrary act was the subject of a vigorous protest addressed to the presidents and members of the various national Red Cross Committees, by the international Committee of Geneva on May 8th. This committee took the initiative in submitting its protest to the whole world in virtue of its mandate and the moral authority accorded to it. The International Committee of Geneva, as guardian of the traditions and principles which have made the union and the strength of the Red Cross Society, considered the decision of the German Governor-General of occupied Belgium a measure calculated to injure the work of the Red Cross Society and interfere with its normal and regular action.

* * *

Did the German Government take measures to instruct its soldiers concerning the spirit of the Geneva Convention, as enjoined by Article 26? We may well ask this question. How many German wounded, when brought into Belgian hospitals, behaved in a surly and suspicious fashion during the first days after their arrival, some even refusing obstinately to lay aside their arms? This happened so often that we must suppose a great number of German soldiers had no idea of the protection ensured to the wounded by the emblem of the Red Cross. There is no other possible explanation of their conduct, unless we assume that they were systematically misled by their superiors as to the sentiments of the Belgian population towards wounded soldiers. If this last hypothesis be the true one, the use made by the German officers of their authority over their subordinates would be in direct contradiction to the views which inspired the founders of the Red Cross Society.

* Father Goovaerts' complete report is given on p. 121.

Thus by a variety of incidents the mentality of those who do not hesitate to accuse the Belgian population—without any reservation whatever—of having failed to respect the tutelary insignia of the wounded, stands revealed.

* * *

We find, therefore, that there are very numerous causes of complaint against the German authorities and troops in Belgium with regard to infringements of the Geneva Convention. Nevertheless it must be admitted that extenuating circumstances must in justice be conceded in respect of certain of the charges, even though these charges be based upon authentic incidents. Many acts of violence and ill-will were indubitably committed, but some of these may have been provoked by the frenzy of battle and the riot of passions which is its inevitable accompaniment. On the other hand, fatal mistakes were certainly made. Hence the Belgian Government does not assert that the German army as a whole and on every occasion was guilty of violating the Geneva Convention. The King's Government—though it is the victim and not the aggressor, though its righteous anger might perhaps excuse its derogation from the serenity that is certainly an easier matter to the assailant, the responsible author of the calamity that has fallen upon the land—will not commit this injustice. It cannot, however, forget that the German Government has incriminated the "Belgian population" without reservation or restriction, and has sought to draw down the animadversions of the world on the entire nation by means of an accusation formulated in general terms.

CHAPTER III.

ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE BELGIAN COMMISSION OF INQUIRY.

The "White Book" declares that the narratives of fugitives collected by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry bear the stamp of improbability, not to say of a malicious perversion of fact, that, moreover, the Commission is incapable, by reason of circumstances, of verifying the truth of the rumours that reach it or of appreciating the correlation of events. Its conclusion is given in these words: "For these reasons its accusations against the German army are nothing but base calumnies" (pp. 5, 6).

What foundation is there for these assertions? It is true, as we have already stated, that the Belgian Government has been unable to hold inquiries on the spot save in a few places; but whereas it has repeatedly proposed to entrust this undertaking to an international commission, the German Government has met the suggestion not only with a formal refusal, but with an obstinate silence, which has relieved it of the difficult, if not impossible, task of justifying its attitude. If the Imperial Government is really persuaded that the accusations brought by the Belgian Commission against the German army are merely "base calumnies," why should it reject the means of bringing the truth to light? Why should it have allowed the world to give credence to "rumours" which it could so easily have discredited, had they been false—for at the beginning of the war no one, least of all perhaps anyone in Belgium, save those who had witnessed the facts in question, would have accepted them as true? If, then, the Belgian Commission has been unable to verify the stories told by fugitives on the spot it is because the German Government, for reasons it has not disclosed, has prevented it from so doing.

However, this local verification, which it would have been so desirable to carry out at once, and which will, in fact, be carried out after the liberation of the soil, with all necessary guarantees of impartiality, was not absolutely indispensable; thanks to the multiplicity of witnesses, a number of incidents have been reconstituted with such precision that the data of the accusations formulated by the Commission of Inquiry cannot be questioned. A great many of the depositions held over by the Commission will be verified as soon as possible. The result of such investigation will very probably be an acknowledgment that if the Belgian Commission deserves any sort of criticism, it might be charged with having erred through an excess of prudence.

The statements of the Commission are, indeed, supported by hundreds of witnesses belonging to every class of society: priests, magistrates, university professors, officials, manufacturers, tradesmen, workmen, and soldiers of every rank, have come from every corner of the country to Brussels, Antwerp, Ostend, Havre, to bear testimony. They signed their depositions and accept full responsibility therefor. These depositions, which agree, though there was no possibility of preconcerted action, form an important *dossier*. They will be published when the German occupation is at an end, and the witnesses and their families, who have remained in the country, have nothing more to fear from German vengeance.

The conclusions of the Committee derive special force from the observations made on the spot in August and September, 1914, by some of its members in the parts of the country not at the time occupied by the Germans, as well as from the reports addressed to it at this period by the judicial and administrative authorities. The diaries found upon German officers and soldiers killed or captured also contribute largely to the confirmation of certain statements made by the Belgian Commission. The same may be said of declarations made by German prisoners interrogated in France (see p. 169).

The statements of the Belgian Commission are, moreover, confirmed by the inquiries held in England and France. Convincing proof of this will be furnished by a comparison with the conclusions of the Commission appointed by the British Government under the presidency of Lord Bryce, and with the documents published as appendices to the report of this Commission. The Commission appointed by the French Government has also recorded a considerable number of incidents analogous to those which took place in Belgium. This perfect concordance reveals

the existence of a veritable system, and forbids us to consider the deeds of violence committed by the German troops as fatalities rendered inevitable by war, however perfect the discipline of an army may be.

Finally, the conclusions of the Belgian Commission are in complete accord with the spontaneous declarations of witnesses belonging to neutral States. The deposition of M. Grondijs, formerly professor at the Technical Institute at Dordrecht, a Dutch subject, to take but one witness, contradicts and annihilates the German version of events at Louvain. This deposition is reproduced on p. 253 of the present volume.

Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, and Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur, have been able to note the extent of the ravages caused by the German invasion in their dioceses, and determine their causes. M. Tschoffen, Public Prosecutor at Dinant, has done the same in his district.* Their statements, which no one will question, differ in no respect from those of the Commission of Inquiry.

* * *

The reproach addressed by the "White Book" to the Commission of Inquiry of having sanctioned base calumnies is a gratuitous insult; the Belgian Government is not alone in this opinion. What, we may ask, was the procedure adopted by the German investigators to establish truth, and give them the right to deny all value to the statements of the Belgian Commission?

Whereas the Belgian Government entrusted the task of inquiry to a Civil Commission, the German "White Book" relies, not mainly—which would have been excusable, taking into account the object of its publication—but almost exclusively upon data collected by the military authorities, or emanating from military sources. Setting aside the Prefatory Note composed in the Imperial Foreign Office, the "White Book" contains only the four general Reports upon occurrences at Aerschot, Andenne, Dinant, and Louvain; drawn up by the Military Bureau of Inquiry instituted at the Prussian War Office, extracts from field-diaries, reports (*Meldungen*) by officers, and depositions of officers and soldiers. These depositions, with few exceptions,† were made before war-tribunals, before military men generally of a higher rank than the witnesses, or before the Military Bureau of Inquiry at Berlin itself. The depositions of soldiers should not, certainly, have been excluded; but the authors of the abuses of power or the terrible mistakes committed in Belgium have really too great an interest in representing themselves as victims of the attacks of the population, for us to accept their one-sided statements as impartial. The amount of credit due to them is further diminished when we consider the conditions under which a large number of them were received. As to the Note issued by the Foreign Office itself, which occupies but six pages out of the 328 of which the "White Book" is composed, it is obvious that the considerations of international law formulated therein, as well as the deductions drawn from these considerations, notably on pages 2 and 3, do not emanate from the chiefs of the army of invasion; ‡ on the other hand, the account there given of the incidents actually witnessed in Belgium are based exclusively, it would seem, on military reports. At any rate, there is no suggestion that officials of the German civil administration, who abound in the occupied country, were called upon to test the truth of the audacious and improbable assertions contained in the 212 appendices of the "White Book."§

* The above lines were written before the Belgian Government was aware of the refutations made by the Bishops of Namur and Liège in reply to the allegations of the "White Book" as to occurrences in their dioceses.

† Only twelve depositions were made in civil jurisdictions, all in Germany; they are embodied in App. 49 (5 depositions), 50, 54, 56, 65, D 35 and 36 (2 depositions). With the exception of the last two, they were all made by soldiers in hospital.

‡ See on this point pp. 7 *et seq.*, of the present volume.

§ According to certain information received, two official Commissions, one civil, the other military, were appointed in the autumn of 1914 in Germany, to enquire into the alleged acts of cruelty committed by belligerents. Although they acted independently, they are said to have arrived at identical conclusions. The Civil Commission in particular is said to have declared that there was no proof of the allegation that Belgian women had put out the eyes of the wounded, and that, generally speaking, acts of cruelty had been grossly exaggerated. Whatever may be said as to the accuracy of this information, it is obvious that in formulating the accusations of cruelty against the Belgian population set forth on p. 4, the authors of the Prefatory Note of the "White Book" relied exclusively upon military sources of information.

It may even be observed that of the only two German civilians called upon to give evidence—or at least the only ones whose depositions are given in the “White Book”—one, Herr Sittart, a member of the Reichstag domiciled at Aix-la-Chapelle, appeared on November 14th, 1914, before the garrison command (*Garnison-Kommando*) of that town, where he was interrogated by a councillor of the tribunal of war, assisted by a military clerk of the court (App. D 30), and that the other, Herr Bloch, made his deposition on December 14th, 1914, at Brussels, before the tribunal of the Governor-Generalship of Belgium, also composed of a military councillor and a military clerk (App. 51).

The German military authorities caused inquiries to be held among the inhabitants in a great many places. It is easy to form an idea of the value of the depositions taken down under such conditions: in this one-sided inquiry was the protocol drafted with all necessary guarantees of impartiality? Were the Walloon and Flemish witnesses always perfectly understood by their German interrogators? Were they allowed to speak freely? May they not have been anxious to say nothing which would be displeasing for fear of reprisals? And even so it may be affirmed that these necessarily partial inquiries did not come up to the expectations of those who prescribed them; the “White Book,” indeed, mentions only one enquiry of this kind, that entrusted to a young officer, Sub-Lieutenant Götze, at Andenne (App. B. 4). The “White Book” refrains, save in three instances, from reproducing any of the depositions taken down in the course of such inquiries, or independently of them. The three depositions admitted are to be found in App. 51—a dual deposition by the German Bloch and his Belgian servant, Brontine, relating to the same incident—and App. D 31—a deposition by Dr. Lemaire of Louvain University, of Belgian nationality. The absence of the evidence of civilians from the “White Book” is the more significant, seeing that a great many German subjects remained in Belgium throughout the war.*

* * *

It is certain that no judicial authority in the world would recognise any probatory force in the inquiry held at Andenne (App. B 4). The eleven inhabitants of the town convoked by M. de Jaer (acting as the Burgomaster’s substitute) in obedience to the orders of Sub-Lieutenant Götze, were nearly all evidently anxious to plead ignorance, the majority declaring that they took refuge in their cellars during the terrible days, and saw nothing of the events that occurred. It would be unjust to reproach them for their attitude. What guarantee, moreover, does the summary of their depositions drawn up by the German officer afford? There does not even seem to have been any textual transcription of these depositions, a precaution the more necessary as the investigating officer and the witnesses did not speak the same language.

The report of the officer deputed by the military Governor of the province of Namur to collect information on the subject of the massacres at Andenne, admits without any circumlocution that 196 inhabitants of the town were undoubtedly shot, whereas 28 must be considered simply to have disappeared; the list of victims drawn up by the communal authorities consists of 234 names. Three lines of a report, which contains 78, record this appalling carnage; there is no further allusion to it. Götze hardly pauses to elucidate the circumstances which led to the executions. He merely reports that all the deputy Burgomaster knows is, that on August 20th, at 7 o’clock in the evening, when the German troops were preparing to cross the bridge on their way to Seilles, a murderous fire was opened upon their ranks; M. de Jaer does not state whence this fire came, nor whether those who fired were soldiers or civilians. The witness Debrun states that when he was in his garden at 7 o’clock in the evening of August 20th, an aeroplane appeared at a great height, and the German troops at once began to fire at it. All of a sudden, he reports, fire was opened from every side in the town. The German military reports say nothing of the appearance of this aeroplane. May we not reasonably ask whether one of the various bodies of troops in Andenne at this date did not take the fire directed against

* Among these Germans, Herr Bloch, mentioned above, declares that he only left Brussels on August 20th, 1914, at 6 a.m., that is to say a few hours before the entry of the German troops into the Belgian capital (App. 51). He returned, no doubt, shortly afterwards, for he seems to have left of his own free-will, and in his deposition made in Brussels, December 14th, 1914, he does not complain of having been molested by the Belgian population before his departure. The private soldier, Roleff, was nursed at Andenne by German families living in the town (App. B 3).

the aeroplane to be an attack on the part of the inhabitants? The latter declare unanimously that none of them committed any acts of hostility. On the other hand, may not the soldiers have imagined (taking into account their state of nervous tension), that the bullets which were fired at the aviator, and fell back on the ground, came from rifles fired in the houses? The schoolmaster Belin is said to have declared that it was believed at Andenne that a Belgian deserter in civilian costume had fired upon the German troops; another deserter, also in civilian costume, accompanied him; both were strangers in the town. Finally M. Cartiaux, the parish priest, states that in the month of September, 1914, three suspicious characters were arrested. These statements are the only elucidations offered by the Götze inquiry as to the determining causes of the massacre at Andenne, which cost several hundreds of civilians their lives. And, moreover, the report makes no reference to Major von Polentz' hundred scalded soldiers (Cf. p. 107 and App. 2).

On the other hand, the Sub-Lieutenant discusses at some length the question whether a young boy was really shot because a cartridge was found upon him; he contests the statement that another doctor was shot in addition to Dr. Camus, Burgomaster of Andenne, an elderly man of sixty-four; he denies that seven persons of the *same* family were killed by German bullets, as was reported; the individuals in question really belonged to *two* families, those of the brothers Davin; he notes how it was generally recognised in Andenne that unconfirmed rumours were circulating in the town, among others that according to which certain inhabitants were put to death with hatchets. The report further certifies that only 37 houses out of 1,900 in the town were destroyed, although many houses were damaged by rifle fire in the course of the street fighting, without, however, any very serious loss to the owners. The Sub-Lieutenant allows that "a great many windows were broken when the cannon was fired on the Place du Marché." The report concludes with these words, which emphasise its futility: "According to the schoolmaster Belin the population of Andenne is very silly, which would account for the incredible rumours that obtained in the town."*

The Andenne inquiry was a mere parody. And yet the report of this inquiry is the only one of the kind that the compilers of the "White Book" ventured to insert!

It is important to note in this connection that according to the statement of the parish priest Cartiaux, a military inquiry had already been opened at Andenne in September, 1914; there is no further mention of this first inquiry elsewhere in the "White Book." It may fairly be assumed that the military authorities only ordered the second inquiry to save their faces; for when the matter in question was the elucidation of one of the most awful tragedies of the war, they deemed it adequate to send to Andenne a young Sub-Lieutenant, who does not even seem to have enjoyed the help of a clerk, and who, at the beginning of his report, bears witness at once to his lack of conscience and his prejudice by speaking of the "pretended" war atrocities at Andenne. The "White Book" does not state the profession practised by Götze in civil life, as it does in the case of all officers of the Reserve; we may therefore conclude that this sub-lieutenant is a professional soldier. The investigator sent to Andenne was therefore most probably a very young man, as we must suppose from his rank, and one entirely lacking in judicial experience.

* * *

As we have noted above, only two depositions by Belgian civilians have been reproduced integrally—as far as we can judge—in the "White Book." They are the depositions of Dr. Albert Lemaire, Professor of the University of Louvain, on the one hand, and of M. Brontine of Brussels, the servant of Herr Bloch, a German subject, on the other. M. Lemaire's evidence is, as a fact, an overwhelming indictment of the Germans. The professor declares that he saw no civilians firing from the houses or in the streets; he further declares that all the houses of doctors and professors in the Rue Léopold were burnt (App. D 31).† M. Brontine, confirming his master's deposition, declares that on August 19th, 1914, a police superintendent refused to receive the revolver which the witness came to hand over, on the ground that "one must not believe everything the papers say." The German authorities

* It appears from the inquiry of Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur, that M. Belin formally denies having expressed this opinion. (See p. 337).

† This deposition is no doubt inserted in the "White Book" because Dr. Lemaire declares that the soldiers who were quartered in his house in the afternoon of August 25th behaved properly.

know perfectly well that in consequence of the notice published by M. Max, Burgomaster of Brussels, on August 12th, 1914 (see p. 11), a considerable number of weapons were given up to the police. The reply of the superintendent in question, always supposing that it was accurately reported and interpreted, cannot invalidate this incontestable fact, nor serve to support the suggestion in aid of which it is apparently invoked, namely, that the police had received no instructions on this head, and that the appeal addressed to the population by M. Max and the other burgomasters of the communes in the district of Brussels was merely formal (App. 51).

Among the other witnesses whose evidence was taken by the German authorities in Belgium we must mention Father Parijs, Sub-Prior of the Dominicans, and Monseigneur Ladeuze, Rector of the University of Louvain. The "White Book" does not reproduce their depositions: the mere fact of the omission of statements emanating from personages so eminently qualified by their office and functions to throw light on events shows most manifestly that the "White Book" is a very incomplete *dossier*. On November 30th, 1914, Father Parijs sent the following open letter to the editor of *La Flandre Libérale*, on the subject of the deposition he had made before the German authorities:—

"On one of the early days of October *La Flandre Libérale* communicated to its readers a letter from Herr J. Partsch, a Professor at Freiburg, recounting in his own manner the unhappy events which took place at Louvain on August 25th, 26th and 27th. In a parenthesis he invokes the testimony of the Dominicans of Louvain in support of assertions which we consider absolutely inaccurate. Like certain other gentlemen, he tries to make out that the Dominicans declared that civilians had fired upon the German troops, and had thus provoked the terrible reprisals from which the town had suffered.

"As I alone among the Dominicans was actively and consecutively concerned in the events of the days mentioned above, I think it my duty to offer a formal contradiction to Herr J. Partsch, and to inform the public that neither I nor any other Dominican of Louvain can be quoted as a witness to the fact that civilians fired upon the German soldiers. Moreover, we do not believe that anything of the sort happened. *I personally declared on oath, before the German examining magistrate, that I never saw any inhabitant of Louvain firing on the soldiers, and that I have no proof whatever of such an occurrence.* All the Dominicans of Louvain are of the same opinion as myself, and are ready to give evidence.

"I shall be greatly obliged to you, Sir, if you will kindly communicate this letter to the readers of *La Flandre Libérale*, and thus help us to undeceive those who have been led by certain newspapers to believe, contrary to fact, that the Dominicans declared that the civilians of Louvain had fired upon the soldiers."

The "White Book," moreover, does not confine itself to suppression of the deposition of Belgian witnesses, whatever their competence and authority; it goes so far as to rely (App. D 30), without mentioning the categorical contradictions that had been given to them, on the alleged statements of a Belgian witness, Monseigneur Coenraets, Vice-Rector of the University of Louvain, to the effect that shots were fired upon the German soldiers who accompanied him when he had just finished reading a proclamation to the people in the streets of Louvain. This speech was also ascribed to Monseigneur Coenraets by Dr. Sonnenschein, who reproduced it in an article from Louvain in the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* of September 5th, 1914. Monseigneur Coenraets hastened to repudiate the words attributed to him, but the German newspapers refused to insert his letters of protest. The following is the text of the letter addressed by Monseigneur Coenraets to the Dutch newspaper, *De Tijd*, and published in that journal on March 30th, 1915:—

"I never made any communication to the *Rheinische Westfälische Zeitung*, I was never asked to do so, I was never interviewed by any reporter of that paper, and it is unnecessary to say that I never stated what this journal dares to ascribe to me. A few months ago some other papers published news of the same description. I caused the following contradiction to be inserted in the Dutch and Belgian papers: 'Your issue of September 7th might give rise to the mistaken belief that, according to my evidence, the citizens of Louvain fired on the German soldiers. Kindly note that I herewith declare, openly and emphatically, that I have no idea where the few shots I heard in the distance came from, and that they were certainly not aimed at the German soldiers who were accompanying me. I know nothing whatever of any inhabitant of Louvain having fired.'"

The almost total absence in the "White Book" of the depositions of Belgian or neutral witnesses is the more striking inasmuch as the German Government

fully realised the future value of opinions expressed by persons taking no part in the conflict. Thus in the "White Book" we find certain statements by Belgian witnesses indirectly reported by German officers and soldiers in their depositions.

At Aerschot, for instance, Captain Karge (App. A 3), addressing the man who seemed to him the most intelligent in a group of male civilian prisoners—he was a teacher in a normal school—told him that all the guilty prisoners would be shot, but that his life should be spared in any event "if he would reveal the truth as to the organisation of the attack." The teacher then admitted that the inhabitants of Aerschot had committed a grave fault by receiving fugitive Belgian soldiers into their houses, hiding them, and providing them with civilian clothes; according to him these soldiers undoubtedly combined with the Civic Guard and they afterwards carried out the attack.* Why was not this intelligent witness interrogated by a competent Commission? What weight can be attached to this declaration extorted under a threat of death and as the ransom of his life from a prisoner whose name, moreover, is not given?

Captain and Battalion Commander Josephson (App. D 34) also throws a veil of anonymity over a most important statement attributed to the director of a secondary school. This Belgian is supposed to have told the officer how he had heard an innkeeper of the environs of Louvain declare on August 24th that he had that day seen a band of about 100 young men pass in front of his house on the way to Louvain, talking in a variety of languages. The innkeeper is said to have remarked to the schoolmaster: "If those people get into the town it will be a bad business for Louvain to-morrow." The schoolmaster, on his side, apparently suggested in the presence of the officer that the young men were going to take up their quarters in the University, in the students' rooms, which were vacant as it was then vacation time. Why were this schoolmaster and this innkeeper not regularly interrogated, and why was their evidence not reported directly, instead of from the recollections of a third person?

Herr Sittart, an inhabitant of Aix-la-Chapelle and a member of the Reichstag, adopts similar methods to create the impression that Belgians themselves admitted that the German troops had been fired upon in Louvain (App. D 30). Having seen nothing of what took place himself, Herr Sittart reports what some weeping women and the widow of a doctor said to him at Louvain on August 31st, 1914. A very different value would have attached to the declarations of these women if they had been personally vouched for by their authors. He does not even reveal the name of the doctor's widow. The words attributed to Monseigneur Coenraets in this deposition have been, as we have seen above, formally repudiated by him (p. 69).

Similar indirect testimonies are also adduced by the Reservist Sub-Lieutenant Lemke (App. C 83), but they consist mainly of thanks for the care and nourishment bestowed on sick persons, wounded men, and the inhabitants of Bouvignes, near Dinant. These persons, as well as "the owner of the Château of Bouvignes," the Burgomaster of Bouvignes, and a certain "M. van Willmart," all, according to Lemke, "formed a very high opinion of Germany." If such was really the case, it is inconceivable that these witnesses of the massacres and the sack of Dinant should not have been interrogated in due form, and that their depositions should not have been given a prominent place in the "White Book." This same Sub-Lieutenant further states that a legal functionary of Brussels, whose name is not given, and who was undergoing a cure at Dinant at the time of the calamity, wrote a card to his mother, residing in Germany, expressing his gratitude. Lemke finally alleges that the Burgomaster of Bouvignes spoke with great indignation of the *francs-tireurs*.†

* * *

M. Struycken, Professor at the University of Amsterdam, and a member of the Dutch State Council,‡ expresses himself as follows with regard to the absence of

* There is an ambiguity here in the German text; Karge no doubt means to say that the attack was afterwards undertaken jointly by the Civic Guard and the soldiers in civilian clothes.

† It appears from Monseigneur Heylen's Note of October 31st, 1915, reproduced in the third part of the present volume, that the Burgomaster of Bouvignes contradicts this assertion. He further declares on his word of honour that no civilian in his commune fired on the German troops (see pp. 161 and 339).

‡ The Dutch State Council examines the drafts of bills before they are submitted to Parliament and possesses a general right of supervision over all legislative enactments and regulations at home and in the colonies.

direct statements by civil and even military witnesses of events, and the vagueness of the accusations in the "White Book":—*

"If we try to explain the lack of persuasive power, in many respects, of the German "White Book," we shall find the principal cause of it to be the fact that so little direct evidence was collected or at least published relating to events observed by eye-witnesses, to justify the horrible reprisals carried out upon Belgian civilians. What we find before us is far too much a mass of suppositions, conjectures, and assertions, insufficiently supported by duly attested facts. It is amazing that the personages entrusted with the inquiry—a *Kriegsgerichtsrat* or *Oberkriegsgerichtsrat*, sometimes an *Amtsrichter* or *Oberamtsrichter*†—should have been satisfied with it. With every deposition the perusal of their reports suggests a host of questions in default of answers to which it seems impossible to form any clear judgment, but which, nevertheless, were not put to the witnesses. A large number of soldiers implicated in events seem marked out to make direct statements of the highest importance. We are eager to hear them interrogated; but we seek their evidence in vain in the "White Book." The possibility that the population may have been guilty is certainly not ruled out; but when we see the military authorities at Berlin satisfied with such a method of inquiry, when we find that they obviously consider the evidence so far published as sufficient, we shudder to think on what evidence officers and soldiers of inferior rank must have relied when pronouncing sentence of death on thousands of citizens in Belgium itself, in the fever of conflict, in the devil's cauldron (*Hexenkessel*) of Dinant, in flaming Aerschot and Louvain, and in many other parts of the unhappy country.

"*Man hat geschossen!*" (Somebody fired!) This was the usual signal for murder and destruction. With regard to these shots, we naturally expect the *dossier* to contain abundant direct proofs, given in evidence, that *civilians* fired them. During such furious fighting as that which is alleged to have taken place between the civil population and the German army, there must have been hundreds of witnesses who could have attested the fact. Nevertheless, comparatively few make a direct statement on the subject; and, moreover, their observations were often made under such circumstances as to render them peculiarly liable to error; this is notably the case when in the darkness figures were seen firing from the house-tops, from openings in the roofs or from trees, or aiming at soldiers on the march from cellars and loop-holes on a level with the ground, etc. With regard to Andenne and Aerschot, not a single piece of direct evidence is even quoted. Generally speaking, the accusation is based upon hearsay statements or upon such hypotheses as the following: 'Shots were fired from the houses—mainly from ventilators and openings in the roof'; 'the detonation was not that produced by a German rifle'; 'shot-guns were apparently fired'; 'light clouds of smoke and dust rose into the air above the roof'; 'there were no Belgian or French soldiers left,' or 'there could not have been any left,' etc., etc. When we consider that the German troops lived in constant terror of attacks from the civilian population, whose treachery and cruelty were the subjects of the most fantastic rumours; that many places had been only just evacuated, or, indeed, only partially evacuated by the Belgians and the French; that German soldiers were quartered in many of the houses; that a single shot, and the suggestion that it had been fired by a civilian often gave rise to a savage bombardment of houses by rifles and machine guns on the part of soldiers in the streets, and that the officers were often unable to put a stop to such bombardment; when we consider all this, it is impossible to allow any decisive weight to such depositions, even if reinforced by the statement: '*Es waren bestimmt Zivilisten*,'‡ and we are obliged to demand more direct evidence."

* * *

As we have already shown,§ a great number of the reports and depositions inserted in the "White Book" were only drawn up and received six, and even

* Extract from the Dutch review *Van Onzen Tijd*, years 1914–1915, No. 45. The series of four articles on the subject of the "White Book" in this review is reproduced, together with other studies by the same author, dealing with the present war and international law, in the pamphlet *De Oorlog in België* (Arnhem, S. Gouda Quint, 1915). The passage here given appears on pp. 65 and 66 of the pamphlet.

† Respectively: a President of a Court-Martial, or a President of the military Court of Appeal, a Justice of the Peace, or a Judge of the Court of Appeal of Justices of the Peace.

‡ "They were certainly civilians."

§ See Section I. of Chapter II. of the first part, p. 24.

seven months after the events with which they deal, notably in the case of the massacres and destruction at Dinant.* We are justified in according but a relative value to these belated documents, taking into account the mentality of an army in the field, the strength of the collective suggestion which dominated the minds of the German officers and soldiers, and the fact that in the interval so many other events and emotions have tended to blur the sharp outlines of the original impression.† Would those non-commissioned officers and soldiers who were questioned in February and March, 1915, in their French quarters, have dared to contradict the official truth, i.e., that which their superior officers were determined to have affirmed and confirmed by their subordinates as witnesses? (App. 39 and App. C 10, 13, 14, 15, 41, 52, 53, 54, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 75, 76, 77, 81, 82).‡

Generally speaking, indeed, the majority of the documents published in the "White Book" betray the eagerness of the German authorities to exculpate themselves rather than to give an objective account of facts.

* * *

The "White Book" makes no mention whatever of the massacre of over 400 persons, not to speak of 78 wounded, at Tamines, a township of 5,712 inhabitants. On the other hand, a perusal of the depositions dealing with incidents that took place to the north-east of the province of Liège (recorded in the seventeenth Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry), and of those which occurred in South Luxemburg (about 700 civilians were massacred in this province, see the eighth Report of the Commission of Inquiry), fails to suggest the least idea of the awful reality. The depositions, for instance, make not the slightest allusion to the collective executions which took place at Soumagne (165 victims)§ and at Ette (197 victims).§ These communes contained respectively 4,755 and 1,804 inhabitants (see on p. 105 a long list of places, the scenes of ravage and massacre, to which the "White Book" makes no allusion).

* * *

We may ask, further, whether the German Government made any *attempt* to reveal the truth? The answer to this question must be an unqualified negative. As every one-sided inquiry like that held by the German authorities in Belgium must necessarily be suspect, we can only explain the refusal invariably given by these authorities to the numerous proposals made them to institute inquiries at which both parties should be represented by their desire to conceal the truth.

The Belgian Commission of Inquiry into the violation of international law and of the laws and usages of war has, on the contrary, as we have already stated, repeatedly offered to take part in the constitution of an international Commission. M. Magnette, Senator of Liège, Grand Master of the Great Orient Lodge of Belgium, made the same proposition by letter on September 27th, 1914, to nine of the Masonic Lodges of Germany; his proposal was scornfully rejected by two of these; the other seven did not even deign to reply.|| Similar propositions were repeatedly

* Twenty-two in February and twenty-nine in March, 1915 (irrespective of the fact that several appended documents in the "White Book" contain several depositions), making 51 depositions out of a total of 87 appended documents relating to Dinant.

† It is hardly possible to allow that the diaries of the German soldiers furnished all the answers to the questions put to them. This remark also applies, though perhaps in a lesser degree, to the officers, who are responsible for several belated depositions and reports.

‡ Were not the answers expected of him suggested, to some extent, to the non-commissioned officer, Martin (App. C 68), when he was shown a newspaper article entitled: *The Incredible Cruelties of the German soldiers*. The witness' statements are kept entirely within the lines laid down in this article, which is explicitly mentioned in the first line of the deposition, and also in the last but one, the latter allusion being followed only by these words: "I have nothing more to say." (*Weiter habe ich nichts hinzuzufügen.*)

§ Minimum totals based on the lists giving the names of identified victims.

|| M. Magnette had proposed to make an appeal to the populations of the belligerent countries and their armies, solemnly urging them not to disregard the rules of humanity, of international law, and of the Code of War. He further expressed a wish that a Commission of Inquiry should be instituted, composed of delegates from the Grand Lodges of neutral countries, and of a German and a Belgian Freemason. Writing from Darmstadt, Herr Süss replied to M. Magnette, *inter alia*: "An exhortation to humanity, etc., addressed to our political leaders, our generals, and our soldiers would be superfluous. They are Germans, and Germans are men in the midst of the most violent conflict. And should our German Brothers insult our men in the field and our responsible political groups by the doubt as to their humanity implicit in such an appeal as that you wish to make? Never would I consent to this. The

Footnote continued on page 73.

made by the Belgian religious authorities, notably by His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, and by Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur,* they had no better success. After the sack of Louvain a group of representative citizens of this town, among them Baron Descamps-David, Monseigneur Ladeuze, Rector of the University, Professor Nerinx, etc., put forward a kindred suggestion.† When the German Socialist deputies, Messrs. Noske and Koster, came to Brussels in the autumn of 1914, the Belgian Socialists asked them to take part in a common inquiry, but in vain.‡ The proposals of M. van Kol, the Dutch Socialist Senator, and of M. Vliegen, President of the Dutch Socialist party, were no more fruitful.§ As to the inauguration of a court of arbitration suggested in the collective letter addressed by the Belgian Episcopate to the Austro-German Episcopate on November 24th, 1915, no answer had been received as yet on February 25th, 1916.||

Finally, Abbé Aloïsius van den Bergh, a priest of Dutch origin, long domiciled in Austria, who became a naturalised Austrian seven years ago, and was deputed by a Viennese ecclesiastical association to hold an inquiry in Belgium as to the attitude of the Belgian clergy at the time of the occupation of the country by the German army in August and September, 1914, encountered the same obstinate refusal on the part of the German authorities to elucidate the question by means of a bilateral enquiry. Abbé van den Bergh was accredited by His Eminence Cardinal Piffl, Prince-Archbishop of Vienna.¶

* * *

We have shown that the *dossier* of the "White Book" is incomplete, and that it was composed with a partiality which deprives it of all probatory value. Yet a further proof of the spirit in which this volume has been compiled is to be found in a deliberate textual perversion committed by the authors. The Report of the German Military Bureau of Inquiry concerning the sack and burning of Louvain accuses the Belgian Commission of having declared in its fifth Report that Monseigneur Coenraets, Vice-Rector of the University of Louvain, had been shot. "The slight importance attached by the Commission itself to the stories served up to it (*aufgetischt*)," says the German Report, "stories which unhappily it reproduces without any reservation, is shown amongst other things by the tale of the execution of Bishop (*sic*) Coenraets and Father Schmidt, mentioned in the fifth Report. It speaks itself of the 'alleged' (*angebliche*, a word placed between inverted commas in the German text) execution and roundly repeats the fable that the involuntary spectators of this (alleged!) scene were forced to mark their approval by applause. It would be impossible to recognise more openly that these documents, collected in haste, are published with an eye to sensation, and that truth and justice have no part in them. It should be stated in this connection—a fact of which the Belgian Commission can hardly have been unaware—that Mgr. Coenraets is living at present in perfect health with Professor Toels, at Jirlen (*sic*) in Holland" (p. 237).

This same grievance had already figured in the Note addressed by the Prussian Minister of War, under the date of January 22nd, 1915, to the Imperial Chancellor. It is there formulated in similar, but still more categorical, terms, which suggests that the error committed had not escaped the compilers of the "White Book." The note expresses itself as follows:—

"What we ought to think, for instance, of the Belgian allegations concerning the persecution and murders of priests is clearly indicated by the case of the Vice-Rector of the University of Louvain, Dr. Coenraets; the Belgian Commission of Inquiry gave the most voluminous details concerning his terrible end; he was said to have been put to death at Louvain in the presence of hundreds of spectators

Commission you desire to institute stands condemned, as far as I am concerned, by this suggestion." Herr Kesselring, writing from Bayreuth, also asserts positively, without having seen anything, that the German troops have not committed any cruelties; at the same time he accuses the Belgians, the French and the Russians of the most abominable acts. He concludes by saying that he would not enjoin the German troops to show mercy and kindness, because the behaviour of their enemies makes it impossible for them to do so. Have the Germans no conception at all of the effect produced on foreigners by the complete and voluntary negation of the critical sense they so ingenuously avow? (See the full text of the correspondence, p. 291).

* See pp. 350 and 356.

† See p. 220.

‡ See p. 296.

§ See p. 297.

|| See p. 349.

¶ Two extracts from Abbé van den Bergh's report are reproduced on pp. 278 and 312 of this volume.

(including women and children), who were forced to applaud. This is what we read in the Reports of the Commission, and this is the account it spreads abroad everywhere. The truth is that Dr. Coenraets is at present living with Professor Tools at Heerlen (Holland), and in excellent health."

Furthermore, there is an allusion to this incident, without any mention of names, it is true, in the deposition made by Private Grüner on March 19th, 1915, at Berlin, before the Military Bureau of Inquiry itself. He contests the statement that a *simulated* execution of priests took place in the square outside the railway station of Louvain (App. D 38, p. 304). The exact meaning of the Belgian accusation was therefore perfectly well known to the Military Bureau as early as March 19th. Nevertheless, it persists in its accusation in its report on events at Louvain, dated April 10th, of which Grüner's deposition is one of the appendices. Moreover, on April 10th, Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur, formally noted the insinuation relating to the execution of Monseigneur Coenraets in his protest against the memorandum of January 22nd. The Prefatory Note to the "White Book," drawn up at the Imperial Foreign Office, is dated May 10th; the German Government therefore had plenty of time to withdraw the calumny directed against the Belgian Commission of Inquiry, had it chosen to do so.

It is, as a fact, false that the Commission ever asserted that Monseigneur Coenraets had been put to death. All it alleged was that Monseigneur Coenraets had been subjected by the German soldiers to a mock execution. The following are the words used: "A mock execution of Monseigneur Coenraets, Vice-Rector of the University, and of Father Schmidt, of the Order of Preaching Friars, took place before them. A volley rang out, and the spectators, who were convinced of the reality of the drama, were forced to applaud."*

"I might write a bitter word here," says Abbé van den Bergh in this connection (see p. 314 of the present volume), "but I refrain. It is sad. And this innocent phrase that 'Monseigneur Coenraets is living in Holland in excellent health' is no less revolting. The poor man suffered so terribly that he said to —, who himself repeated it to me: 'I do not suppose I shall ever be fit for my work again.'"

But the Belgian Government does not hesitate to admit that, according to information recently received, the statements of witnesses before the Commission of Inquiry seem to have been inaccurate on one point.

Deceived no doubt by the volleys and the mock executions at which they were present, these witnesses imagined that Monseigneur Coenraets had been the victim of a species of moral torture actually inflicted on a large number of their compatriots, notably a group of priests which included Monseigneur van Cauwenbergh, the second Vice-Rector of Louvain University, and Father Vermeersch, of the Society of Jesus. Fleeing from Louvain on August 27th, 1914, these clerics were arrested at Tervueren and carried about in carts for sixty-two hours in the district round Brussels. They were several times made to undergo mock execution.

* * *

It is impossible to accept the conclusions of the "White Book" as a decisive judgment by an impartial tribunal. The one-sided inquiry conducted by the German authorities in Belgium could not and did not establish the truth. The Belgian Government therefore intends—and it seizes this fresh opportunity to proclaim it solemnly—to institute a Commission of international inquiry as soon as Belgian soil is free again, a tribunal before which accuser and defendant will plead with equal rights. It is certainly much to be regretted that time will necessarily impair the precision of memories and efface many material evidences; the task of the International Commission will not be an easy one in many cases. We find the German authorities, who fully realise the advantages to be gained in this connection by exercise of the dictatorial powers they now enjoy, threatening to take the most severe measures against persons who should fail immediately to hand over to officials at the Town Hall of Dinant any lists in their possession of bodies exhumed (notice placarded at Dinant on October 20th, 1914). In certain places, again, they have taken steps to conceal the traces of destruction, thus endeavouring to mitigate the wrath and indignation kept alive by the lamentable sight of towns and villages

* See p. 71 of the first volume of *Rapports sur la Violation du Droit des gens en Belgique*. Paris-Nancy, Berger-Levrault, 1915.

reduced to ashes. Throughout the country, moreover, photographing the devastated districts was strictly forbidden, as soon as the German authorities had power to prevent it.

But all these precautions will be of no avail: it will take many long years to repair the all too skilfully conceived and executed work of the incendiary sections. As to the lists of the victims of "reprisals" which the Belgian Commission of Inquiry already possesses, and those which it will yet receive, they will constitute a crushing indictment against Germany as long as the righteous anger of the world is roused by iniquity.

* * *

Strong in the justice of its cause, and the scrupulous honesty, of which the members of the Commission of Inquiry it has instituted have made an immutable law for their guidance, the King's Government awaits the verdict of the universal conscience in perfect confidence.

Already Justice begins to shine through the clouds. Professor Struycken comes to the following conclusion in his study on the "White Book" (*supra*, p. 70), published in the Dutch Review *Van Onzen Tijd* (Nos. 43-46, years 1914, 1915, p. 549)—

"It has already been remarked on several occasions during this war that the Germans have no very exalted opinion of the intelligence and critical sense of neutrals whom they wish to convince of the justice of the German cause. The German "White Book" furnishes a fresh proof of this. If they really desire to persuade neutrals that they were justified in dealing so severely with the civil population in Belgium, they must produce a mass of evidence very much more convincing (*Heel wat deugdelijker bewijsmateriaal*) than that they offer us here. We are anxious to hear both sides of the story of events, and not to base an opinion solely on Belgian, French and English reports, which may easily contain exaggerations. But it rests with the Germans to bring forward a body of evidence capable of resisting the test of critical examination, really proving what we should be glad to believe, and not tending to establish just the opposite conclusions."

The meagreness and lack of precision of the German evidence has already struck all intelligent minds. The abundance and pertinence of the Belgian proofs will finally convince them. They will understand and share the sentiment which the Belgian Government does not hesitate to express as to the conduct of the Imperial Government towards the Belgian nation, in all serenity, before God and men: "Doubly guilty is he who, after having violated the rights of another, impudently attempts to justify himself by imputing to his victim faults he has never committed."

Le Havre, February 25th, 1916.

BARON BEYENS,

Minister for Foreign Affairs.

H. CARTON DE WIART,

Minister of Justice.

SECOND PART.

Statement of Facts, and Critical Examination of the Reports of the German Military Commission of Inquiry and of the German Documents and Depositions of Witnesses.

CHAPTER I.

DESTRUCTION AND MASSACRES IN VARIOUS DISTRICTS.

If one looks on the map at the districts where the systematic atrocities of the army of invasion were committed a decisive circumstance is at once established. It is especially, though not entirely, in the places where the invader met with resistance from regular troops that civilians were murdered, their houses burned, and looting methodically carried out.

The districts in question include :—

1. The plateau of Herve and, generally, the places in the neighbourhood of the forts of Liége, and also the towns and villages where the German army was, from the 6th to the 20th August, 1914, attempting to force a passage against the resistance of the Belgian army.

2. The valley of the Upper Semois and that of the Upper Lesse, where bloody encounters between the invaders and the French army took place during the second half of the month of August.

3. The Entre-Sambre-et-Meuse and the Charleroi and Mons districts, where, during the same period, violent battles were waged between the German army and the Anglo-French armies.

4. The scene of the fighting which followed on the sorties of the Antwerp garrison, and the combats during the siege of the city, where the German army was resisted by Belgian troops from the 20th August to the 9th October.

5. The Yser district from the time when, on the 16th October, 1914, the battles of the Yser and Ypres began.

In all these areas the extent of the disasters is immense. The worst of these fearful events occurred during August, 1914; afterwards the frequency and the violence of the "reprisals" diminished. In the Province of Western Flanders (Yser district) the damage appears to be chiefly due to bombardment and other military operations.

The "White Book" in general attempts to conceal the gravity of these cruelties; as a rule it is content to pass them over without mention. In the first part, containing 66 documents (App. 1 to 66), it brings forward reports (*Meldungen, Berichte*) by officers and also depositions by officers, non-commissioned officers, and men,* wherein is set out, with more or less precision, the fact that in certain places civilians joined in the firing, and that in others the population joined in the fighting, and that in others again mutilation, attributed to the population, of dead or wounded German soldiers was noted. In the following parts, the "White Book" is concerned more particularly with the events of Aerschot, Andenne, Dinant and Louvain.

The communes, or parts of communes, nearly 80 in number, which the "White Book" mentions are, in order of Provinces, as follows :—

BRABANT.

Aerschot.
Bueken.
Capellen.

Hérent.
Hougaerde.
Kessel-Loo.
Louvain.

Neerlinter.
Rotselaer.
Schaffen.

* Among these 66 documents there are four reports or depositions of army surgeons, and a map.

WESTERN FLANDERS.

Eesen.

Roulers.

Staden.

Westroosebeke.

EASTERN FLANDERS.

Deynze.

HAINAULT.

Acoz.

Aiseau.

Anderlues.

Charleroi.

Fleurus.

Gerpinnes.

Gougnyes.

Lessines.

Monceau-sur-Sambre.

Peissant.

LIÉGE.

Francorchamps

(Ward of Hockai).

Battice.

Chênée.

Esneux.

Herve.

Louveigné.

Poulseur.

Retinne.

Trembleur (Blegny).

Warsage.

(BELGIAN) LUXEMBURG.

Anlier (Behême).

Attert (Nothomb).

Bovigny.

Chiny.

Florenville.

Gouvvy.

Houdemont.

Jamoigne.

Léglise.

Les Bulles.

Marche.

Mellier (Thibessart).

Morhet (Rosière).

Porcheresse.

Rossignol.

Rulles.

Saint-Vincent.

Sainte-Marie.

Termes (Frenois).

Tintigny (Ansart).

Villers-devant-Orval.

NAMUR.

Andenne.

Anthée.

Biesme.

Bièvre.

Bouvignes.

Champion.

Conneux.

Couvin.

Dinant (with the wards

of Leffe, Les Rivages

and Neffe).

Evelette.

Graide.

Laneffe.

Leignon (Ychippe and

Corbion).

Le Roux.

Leuze.

Malonne (La Vigne).*

Rosée.

Silenrieux.

Somzée.

Sorinne.

The "White Book" contains no document relating to the devastation and massacres in the Provinces of Limburg and Antwerp.

* * *

The evidence and the reports given in the first part (App. 1 to 66) are inserted without any comment. It would seem that, as in the case of those inserted in the other parts, they were accepted without any check or discussion. Yet they are in themselves suspect; they emanate, in fact, from soldiers whose imagination was over-stimulated by the fighting and who had to justify the crimes of which they are accused. Nearly two-thirds of the documents in this first part which bear a date were drawn up, on an average, two or three months after the circumstances to which they relate. (See, on this, p. 23.)

The Belgian Government, removed from its country and deprived of the means of investigation and criticism, has been unable to inquire into every one of the charges made in the "White Book." But the Belgian Commission of Inquiry has collected hundreds of statements by persons who, without hesitation, declare that the civil population everywhere scrupulously refrained from taking part in the struggle, and indignantly protest against the calumnies heaped upon that population. The Commission boldly affirms that, in the districts where it has been able to pursue its inquiries, no single deed on the part of a *franc-tireur*—to take the most common accusation—seems to them to have been proved or even to be probable.

The mere examination of the evidence against this categorical affirmation increases its force, so feeble is that evidence. It reveals in many places the bias

* The name of this place, which is near Tamines, is wrongly spelled "Vignée" in the "White Book" (App. 41).

of the witnesses, the want of precision, the inaccuracy and the improbability of their assertions.

Take, for example, the statement of the events in a certain number of localities with which the first part of the "White Book" is concerned. These examples could easily be multiplied. They will be borne in mind when reading the refutations by Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, and by Mgr. Rutten, Bishop of Liège.*

ACOZ.

The Commune of Acoz (1,393 inhabitants), situated at the eastern boundary of the Province of Hainault, was burnt down at the time of the fighting on the Sambre in August, 1914.

Among the numerous dwellings which were deliberately set on fire were the Convent of the French Sisters, the Post Office, the Town Hall and the school.

Three persons, Abbé Douet, the priest of Acoz, who was nearly 70 years old, and MM. Archange and Joseph Bourboux were shot in the Commune of Somzée.

There are four depositions in the "White Book" relating to the village of Acoz.

Sub-Lieutenant Huck, commanding the 2nd horse dépôt of the 10th Army Corps, states that at Acoz, at 10 p.m. on the 24th August, he was fired at from the houses (App. 43); Captain Lüdke, commanding the 2nd transport section of the same Army Corps, confirms this deposition (App. 44), as also do Lieutenant Müller, commanding the 5th artillery ammunition column of the 10th Corps (App. 45, 1), and Sub-Lieutenant Schroeder (App. 45, 2).

On the other hand, it appears from information in the possession of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry that the inhabitants of Acoz had quitted the village on the morning of the 22nd August, when the Germans crossed the Sambre at Châtelet; the burgomaster and the rural policemen were the last to leave. The French military authorities had requested them to have the village evacuated so as not to hinder the firing, being informed that the Germans in the Châtelet district were forcing civilians to march in front of them.

When M. Paul Gendebien, advocate at the Court of Appeal of Brussels, left the village, all the doors were shut and all the shutters fastened; the inhabitants had fled. Sub-Lieutenant Huck himself states in his deposition (as does also Captain Lüdke) that the greater part of the houses appeared to be abandoned and were shut up.

An inhabitant of Acoz was able to re-enter the village about five in the evening to take a few things away; the village was deserted.

Who, then, were the numerous *francs-tireurs* who, according to the "White Book," opened fire on the German soldiers? Huck says, in fact, that firing occurred from *almost all* the houses in the street, whilst Müller alleges that he recognised by the sound that the persons firing were using sporting guns.

A circumstance which shews the extent to which the Germans were dominated by the delusion of these so-called *francs-tireurs* is that Captain Lüdke, in order to give greater weight to his evidence, relates that he was told that there were found at the Town Hall several cases of dynamite and hundreds of guns and packets of cartridges, each packet bearing the name of an inhabitant of the commune—a proof, according to him, that the civilians were organised for armed resistance, when the deposit of these arms and cartridges at the Town Hall ought in itself to have shewn him that the inhabitants had no hostile intentions. As to the dynamite, it is sufficient to note that Acoz lies in the centre of a manufacturing district. Here, as elsewhere, the communal authorities had caused the weapons and munitions in the possession of the inhabitants to be delivered up; and in order to be able to restore them after the war, they had taken care to have written on each weapon and on each packet the name of the owner. But German prejudices are so strong that this surrender of weapons is itself invoked as evidence against the people. Lieutenant Müller and Sub-Lieutenant Schroeder (App. 45) even say, in order to prove the guilt of the priest of Acoz, that there was found at his house (or on him) a receipt for 50 cartridges and an English revolver which he had handed over to the communal authorities!

Müller and Huck add that the priest was shot together with two others, who were found hidden in the barn of the priest's house. According to the soldiers, the priest, by signs, offered them drink and money to prevent them searching the house. He also categorically denied that there was anyone there and at first refused to allow the soldiers to enter, shewing them the emblem of the Red Cross, which he

* See Appendix, Doct. IX., pp. 322-349.

wore on his arm. Müller says that the priest and the two other civilians did not deny that they took part in the fighting. But as the priest expressed himself in part by signs, it may well be doubted whether the soldiers understood him. Does not Sub-Lieutenant Schroeder himself, who interrogated the three prisoners, declare that he only obtained unintelligible replies?

According to Huck, the two civilians had arms, cartridges and cartridge cases; Lüdke only speaks of cartridges; Müller merely says that on one of the civilians they found four cartridge cases; according to Schroeder, who interrogated them without understanding their replies, weapons and cartridge cases had been found in the barn, the soldiers said.

However this may be, as we have seen above, the priest of Acoz and the two civilians were shot. Moreover, from the time Huck had arrived in the village, the priest had, by his behaviour, made a bad impression on him. The houses from which firing took place were set on fire, declares Lüdke; Acoz was delivered to the flames, states Schroeder. Yet they had only found three *francs-tireurs*: the priest and two other civilians!

BATTICE.*

The village of Battice (3,179 inhabitants) was looted and burned on Thursday, the 6th August, 1914, by the German forces repulsed by the Forts of Liège.

Thirty-six persons, three of whom were women, were murdered. Many inhabitants received bullet wounds.

The village was deliberately set on fire; the church was destroyed; the station district where the German troops were quartered was alone spared, together with the hamlets at some distance from the centre of the commune.†

What explanation does the German Government give of these murders and this destruction? It brings forward a declaration of Max Amelunxen, a sub-lieutenant of reserve, belonging to the 4th Jäger battalion, who declares that, on the 4th or 5th August, civilians had fired at him as he was passing through Battice with a few cavalrymen. He adds that he was struck by small shot which slightly wounded him (App. 2).

Assuming this deposition to be accurate, one asks: how could this justify the destruction of a village and the murder of 36 of its inhabitants? But it is enough to remark that this destruction and murder took place, not on the 4th or 5th August, but on the 6th, and were committed by the 165th Infantry Regiment, on which rests the guilt of the ravages committed in a very large number of places in Belgium.

Besides, there is nothing to prove that the patrol to which Sub-Lieutenant Amelunxen belonged was attacked by civilians. Quite the contrary. In fact it appears, from information supplied by the Staff of the 3rd Belgian Division, that soldiers of the 1st squadron of the 2nd Lancers were sent on the 4th August to Battice on a reconnaissance. Shots were exchanged between the patrols of this squadron and the Germans, cavalry and cyclists, on the roads from Battice to Thimister, from Battice to Herve, and from Battice to Aubel, as well as at Battice itself. The fixed picquet of the squadron, under the command of Sergeant-Major Evrard, posted at the Battice Mill, opened fire on every German trooper who passed on the road from Charneux to Battice. The 4th squadron of the same regiment also fired on groups of cavalry and cyclists advancing from Herve towards Fléron and stopped their advance.

Moreover, the following report from Abbé Voisin, D.D., priest of Battice, states in the most precise terms the circumstances of the destruction of Battice, and disproves any participation by the civilian population in the fighting which was raging between the Belgians, who were defending the fortified position of Liège, and the Germans who had invaded the national territory on the 4th August, 1914.

“M. LE MINISTRE,

“I have the honour to forward you a report upon the events that occurred in the parish of Battice in the early days of the invasion. I shall limit myself to facts that I witnessed myself or which I have learned from trustworthy witnesses.

“The first German troops reached Battice about mid-day on Tuesday, 4th August. At that moment some Belgian Lancers, who had been out reconnoitring in the morning, were returning along the Aubel road. They were received by a sustained fusillade and escaped at full speed in the direction of Liège. Four of them were wounded, and I was able to give them the consolation

* See also the letter of Mgr. Rutten to the Governor-General of Belgium under occupation, p. 348.

† Seventeenth Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

of religion. One died in a half hour. He was placed on a little hand bier, but the Germans would not allow his remains to be taken to the cemetery, and it was only after several days that he could be buried; decomposition was then well advanced. Another Lancer fell on the steps of the house of M. Wiertz. A parishioner of mine, Adelin Christiane, has informed me that he and a friend wished to succour this poor soldier, who was waving his arm in the air for help; but the Germans prevented them. It was an hour before he was allowed to be removed. I believed him to be at the point of death, but a German army surgeon who was with the troops was requested to examine him, and he tended him with such care that he succeeded in reviving him; this Lancer is now cured.

"As the troops were passing through the village without halting or harming anyone, I went to the hamlet of Bouschmont, where many of the inhabitants of the centre of Battice had taken refuge. I told them that they could return without fear. I had also told them the evening before that we had nothing to fear if we did nothing to harm the army of invasion. I returned an hour later just as a battalion was taking up its quarters in the village.

"Officers and men were paying in gold for their purchases in the shops. But they were already entering, by breaking open doors and windows, houses, the occupants of which had fled; they stole wines and cigars and amused themselves by smashing the furniture. As I know a little German, I was able to talk to the soldiers. One of them, in the presence of M. Brouwers-Willems and members of his family who also understood the language, told me: 'I have come from Berlin and I am tired; we have been four days on the march.' And it is a fact that these soldiers appeared to be quite exhausted. I saw some of them fall on the road and at once go fast asleep. About 6 o'clock MM. Pirard and Radermaecker came to find me. 'Our brother-in-law, Charles Goorissen, has been arrested,' they said. 'Will you go and ask the Major to set him free?' Charles Goorissen was the son of a wealthy farmer—a pious, honest young fellow with an excellent reputation. But the war frightened him. He ran about the street with his coat collar up, and his cap on sideways, and unshaved. The Germans had their eye on him. When he was on the Herve road with four others—an old man named Gilles Kohl, Farmer Kehren, Lallemand of Herve, and a workman of M. Bruwier's, whose name I do not know, but who, it seems, came from Bilsen. All five were arrested, but the old man and the farmer were afterwards released. There were others about. Why, then, were these five singled out? None could tell. Perhaps because their appearance did not please. I went and found the Major at the Quatre Bras inn and spoke to him on Goorissen's behalf. 'I know him intimately,' I said, 'and am convinced that he has done nothing reprehensible.' He replied, with some embarrassment: 'He must be tried.' In the evening I saw them take the poor boy to a doorway. A long statement, it seems, was read to him and then the soldiers removed him, treating him shamefully. A little later I was arrested in my turn and brutally treated. They forced me with their rifle butts to their Major, who was on horseback near the Quatre Bras inn. I asked him what this meant. 'If a single shot is fired,' he replied, 'you will be shot. You are going to see what is done to those who fire at German soldiers.' Immediately afterwards they shot, before my eyes, on the pavement in front of M. Christiane's house, the three who had been arrested that afternoon. Permission to inter their remains in the cemetery was not given until several days after. They were buried at the same time as the soldier whom I have already mentioned.

"I am sure that none of the three was guilty. They were in the street mingling with the soldiers who filled the village, and would therefore have had to fire point blank. Now the Germans did not dare to suggest that a single one of their men was killed or wounded. When arrested in the middle of the road the three were talking with some others. How could they have had any idea of shooting under such circumstances? When I saw the Major, would he not have answered me: 'Civilians who shoot at German soldiers are not set free?' But he was only able to reply with some embarrassment: 'He must be tried.' Lastly, Goorissen, according to his relations and friends, had no weapon on him. Lallemand had returned from Grand Rechain, where he had made in a café hostile remarks about the enemy, but neither mentioned nor shewed any weapons. As to the third, he was a peaceful workman who, like many others, was there out of curiosity. But I noticed that, in the afternoon, the Major was calm and polite and his men almost agreeable; whereas in the evening, they were like demons. The reason is that in the meantime the forts had opened fire and steady fire was continuing. The troops were much alarmed. It is probable that three inhabitants were taken by chance and shot in order to terrorise the population and keep them under.

"The first part of the night I spent leaning against the wall of the Quatre Bras inn with my hands bound, under the care of two sentries. Soon they brought Iserentant, the Sheriff, who was to be killed the next day but one, and Councillor Brouwers. I had round me continually soldiers who insulted me and threatened me with their bayonets. M. Brouwers heard one of them say: 'Black crow, your belly will be ripped up.' They paid little attention to my companions, and I noticed that it was my cassock that was exciting their anger and spite. About 2 a.m. they made us march towards Liège in the middle of the troops. We were struck with rifles and kicked and pushed against one another. Our guard kept on retying the cords that bound us. When we got to Herve a mounted officer stopped and shouted: 'Untie those men and let them go.' A few minutes later we heard a brisk fusillade. The Major had released us just as his men were about to come under fire.

"Wednesday passed without incident. Thursday morning I saw on the Maestricht road numerous soldiers who were returning in disorder, haggard and frightened and black with dust.

I foolishly believed that the German invasion had met with speedy disaster and that the enemy was fleeing, never to return. The few families that remained in the village rendered every possible assistance to the fugitives. They were given food and drink. Hubert Sonas actually washed the feet of about 20 soldiers whose boots were hurting them. As for myself, I asked all who were on my road to come and have a glass of wine at my house. These brought others, so that I opened about 30 bottles. These poor wretches inspired pity rather than hate. They appeared to be grateful. One of them, to shew his confidence in me, produced a locket with a portrait. 'It is my fiancée,' he said. 'Ah, you will no doubt be glad to go to see her again.' 'Yes, but before then we must go to Paris!' An hour later an artillery column arrived from the Aix-la-Chapelle road and stopped in the market place in front of my house. A superior officer with polite manners, who spoke French very correctly, came to my house. 'M. le Curé, where is the burgomaster?' 'The burgomaster has gone.' 'And the people?' 'Some are here, but most have become frightened and taken refuge in the hamlets near by.' 'But why are they frightened?' 'We are not savages, and we pay well for what we take' (so saying he took a handful of gold coins from his pocket). 'Can you not induce the inhabitants to come back? I assure you that you will be doing them a good turn.' 'As they are not far, I can at least inform them of your wishes and ask them to return.' 'Well, do that. You have nothing to fear. I am the commandant of the forces that are arriving, and will take you under my protection. I have several friends among the Belgian clergy and wish you no harm. Tell the people that I am taking them under my protection; they can return without fear.' I went and asked my sexton, who lived opposite the church, to go to the hamlet of Xheneumont, whilst I went to Bouschmont, behind the station. The artillerymen quietly took up their positions in the market. They left the village soon after my departure. I am convinced that the officer who spoke to me had nothing to do with the sack of Battice. He probably reckoned on spending some time in the village. But I saw him talking to another superior officer, a general, I believe, and I suppose he was ordered to set out at once. On my way to the station I found the other soldiers, the fugitives of the morning, sitting or lying down by the roadside. Those I had entertained saluted me, a few somewhat ironically, but others scowled at me and made remarks to one another that I did not hear. I went first to M. Lecloux's farm, and told those who had taken refuge there of my conversation with the Prussian officer. Suddenly firing broke out. 'What is that?' said the farmer to me. I replied: 'No doubt they are firing at an aeroplane, as they did on Tuesday.' I then went to M. Adolphe Herzet to tell him of the wishes of the commandant. Then I became uneasy. It seemed to me that there was firing in all directions and bullets whistled past my ears. I asked a farmer who was hurrying up from the station: 'What does this mean?' 'They say,' he replied, 'that our people have fired at them and they are shooting at all the houses, and they talk of burning down the village.' This is what happened in that tragic hour:—

"The inhabitants, who were peacefully standing on their doorsteps and to whom, as I passed, I had made known the reason of my departure, had to rush indoors, as the soldiers along the Station Road began to shoot at all the windows. Jacques Halleux, who was sitting with his fiancée in a public-house with the door open, was killed on the spot. Ferdinand DENOËL, while running upstairs, was struck by bullets in the side and in the arm. He was able to escape to Bouschmont, where I saw him and rendered first-aid. He is now quite cured. Félix Servais was less fortunate. While escaping towards Bouschmont he was wounded in the thigh. Gangrene supervened, and the poor fellow died at Verviers, where he had been taken. At M. Lecloux's place, the first farm to which I went, soldiers came running, and said that a horse had run away in that direction. They carried off the farmer and also Gustave Beaujean, who had just arrived with his children. As they passed M. Fortemps' house, they asked M. Kévers to take the farmer's horse from the meadow and follow them. They went with their prisoners along the La Minerie road, and on the way stopped Emile Xhaufaair, of La Minerie, and Midrolet, of Battice, the latter of whom had his little child in his arms, and was going to La Minerie with his wife. From the direction of Herve they brought Ruwet, the farmer, who also lived outside the village. These six men were shot on the La Minerie road. Malvaux, the veterinary surgeon, returning from Bouschmont, saw his house on fire and tried to enter. They seized him and took him along the Maestricht road, where they had just arrested two more men, who lived near the colliery, about ten minutes from the village. They were named Ridelle and Habay. All three were shot at the same time as the prisoners from Blégny, who had been brought to Battice. On the Herve road, Iserentant, the sheriff, had taken refuge in the cellar of the farm with his wife, his brother-in-law, Garson (an old man), his maid (a young girl), and a neighbour named Hendrickx. They were all killed in the cellar (Hendrickx lingered for an hour). At the next farm, Hendrickx's, there were two girls. One was sick and was being nursed by a nun. One girl jumped out of the window on to a heap of faggots. She was killed and burnt on the faggots. The sick girl, who escaped into the meadow with the nun, was wounded in the face, but not mortally. There were also two young men there. One was killed, as I have said, at M. Iserentant's. The other was ill in bed. He may have been killed before they set the farm on fire, but it is more likely that he was burnt alive.

"While these murders were being committed, the village was set on fire in four places. On the next day but one (Saturday, the 8th August), they burnt the houses that had escaped the arson of Thursday. The houses near the station were the only ones spared. The Germans knew that these were wanted as quarters for the soldiers guarding the railway lines. These dwellings were, however, almost completely looted. MM. Eugène Lemaire, Eugène Cupers, and Jacques

Liégeois saw in Battice station trucks laden with booty. On Friday, the 7th August, a railway servant, named Wilkin, obtained a safe conduct from an officer in order to get bread at La Minerie. He was returning to Battice, carrying the loaves under his arm, and accompanied by his wife, when he was hit in the mouth by a shot fired from his own house. He fell dead on the spot. Two old people, Eugène Lecloux and his sister, wanted to go into their house, which had been gutted. They were arrested, taken to Blégnny and shot. Emile Liégeois took refuge in a cellar with his two sisters, his brother-in-law, and the latter's two children. Emile heard a noise on the ground floor, went up, and was killed before he could say a word. His sister Maria, who followed, was hit by two bullets. She has told me that, when she fell, she shut her eyes so that they might think her dead. A soldier leaned over her and said to the others: 'The woman is done for, too.' Her brother-in-law eventually took her on a wheelbarrow to the Convent of the Sisters of Providence at Herve. She has now almost recovered.

"Having committed these valiant deeds, the Germans tried to justify them. They have not dared to suggest that they had a single man killed or wounded. But on the Thursday evening the priest of La Minerie, who is a German and has several nephews serving with the enemy, alleged that firing had occurred from Fraikin's house, on the Herve road. On Saturday he came and saw me at Bouschmont farm, where I had taken refuge, and told me that I was accused of shooting from the top of the church tower, and that my life was in danger. He confided to me that he went the evening before into the ruins of the church to remove the Holy Sacrament. But the tabernacle was empty. The sacred vessels had been stolen. Some weeks later this priest, with whom I was intimate, obtained for me from the Commandant's office at Battice permission to go where I pleased in the deanery. As they could not with any decency give such a permission to a priest guilty of shooting at German soldiers, there appeared a few days later, in the *Friend of the People* of Aix-la-Chapelle—and I read it myself—an account of which this is a summary: 'When we arrived at Battice the garrison surrendered (!), the burgomaster read an address of welcome to the German troops, and then drew a revolver and shot the commanding officer. That is the reason why we burned down the village.'

"These accusations are not only untrue, but are also singularly unskillful. M. Fraikin lived alone in his house on the Herve road. His wife and son had been staying at Liège for some months. At the time when he is supposed to have been shooting I was talking to him at Lecloux's farm at Bouschmont, and about 30 people can bear witness that he was in that village at that time. In the houses near his there was nobody. All had fled. If anyone fired thereabout, it could only have been a Prussian soldier. As to the priest, the soldiers, as well as the inhabitants, had seen him leave the village on the officer's invitation ten minutes before the firing began. The burgomaster himself lived at the hamlet of Bruyères, about three miles from the centre of the village. He had been made to come in—much against his will—on the Monday night. I caused him to be informed that the people were frightened and that it was his duty to remain constantly at the Town Hall. But on Tuesday morning, before a single German soldier had entered Battice, he had returned to Bruyères, and he was not seen again until weeks later, when the Germans forced him to return to hand over the communal cash. Of the three accused persons, two remained at Battice; the priest was still there in the middle of November, as was seen and known by the commandant and the soldiers staying in the village. It was want of means, not fear of the Germans, that decided him to leave. But though the so-called criminals are alive, many innocent people fell victims to these savages, who, when they arrived, declared in a celebrated proclamation: 'We come as friends!'

"The arrests and murders of the 6th August were quite as arbitrary. The majority of the men in the centre of the village at the time when it is alleged that the shooting occurred were not disturbed. All those killed, except Halleux and Malvaux, were arrested outside the village. Several were in their working clothes, like poor Lecloux, whom I had just seen in his shirt sleeves and sabots, busied in farm work. All these men were good Christians, model citizens, peaceful and inoffensive people. As for the two victims arrested in the town, I have said before that Halleux was sitting with his fiancée in a house facing the street with the door open. If he had intended to kill one of the soldiers in front of him he knew what to expect. One would believe in that case he would at least have sent his fiancée away and himself have left the place before shooting. Malvaux was returning from Bouschmont. He was drunk, and unable to open the door of his house. It was then that he was arrested. It is clear that he had no idea of shooting at the soldiers who were all round him. Moreover, Malvaux, like Halleux, was one of the most inoffensive men in the world. He had probably never fired a gun in his life. Some of the inhabitants had fled before the Germans came. More had taken refuge in the hamlets after Goorissen was arrested. Those who remained had treated the soldiers well. I mingled freely with the people during those days, and heard none speak of resisting the invaders or of annoying them. It was only after Battice was sacked that they said bitterly: 'Ah! If we had only known.'

"Several newspapers, in particular *Het Centrum*, of 14th July, 1915, have stated that a German deserter who was at Battice on the 6th August had confessed that the village was destroyed because a soldier had killed his captain. It is possible. But I never heard anything about that. It is difficult to say whether the place was destroyed in consequence of such an occurrence or by deliberate intention. If they wished to terrorise the countryside by sacrificing a village, it is easy to understand why Battice was chosen, for it lies on the crest of the Herve district and its flames were seen for miles round. I have been told by the Strouven family that on the

Thursday, about half an hour before the firing began, Mme. Beaujean, whose husband was killed, went to the Strouvens' and said: 'A soldier has just told me that they are going to set the village on fire. I am going away.' It would therefore seem that the destruction was premeditated. On the other hand, it is easier to understand an outburst of homicidal fury on the part of the soldiers if some accident did occur to one of them or of their officers. I add that M. Baurens alleges that a soldier fired into his doorway before the massacre occurred. Remy Lepoureux told me that he heard an isolated shot a few minutes before the volley. Mlle. Emma Strouven has told me the same thing. However this may be, one thing is certain: the inhabitants did nothing to provoke such terrible reprisals. If Battice was destroyed it was either because its destruction had been already decided upon, or a Prussian officer had been killed by one of his men; unless the fugitives simply wished to take revenge for their reception by our forts on peaceable civilians.

* * *

"As the question of *francs-tireurs* is still much under discussion at the present time, I may be allowed, M. le Ministre, to add a few facts which are not known abroad and may serve to elucidate this problem.

"I have often heard it said: 'There were *francs-tireurs*, because it is the most natural thing in the world for the inhabitants of an invaded country to resist the enemy. *Francs-tireurs* are the best patriots.' So people argue at a safe distance and *a priori*. But I was living on this side of the Meuse during the early days of the war, and I can say that as a fact the inhabitants did not consider it natural to resist that swarm of formidably armed soldiers, who were spreading over the country. Certainly patriotism was not wanting. But it manifested itself only in the wish to see our soldiers greet the invaders with the welcome they deserved. They would have been bitterly disappointed if the country had offered no resistance. I even heard one of the parishioners say during the afternoon of Tuesday, the 4th August: 'We are betrayed. The Germans have been passing for hours. They must be well past Liège and yet the forts have not fired a single shot!' Yet they realised that to commit acts of violence would merely mean the sacrifice of one's life for nothing. In truth, the dominating feeling was terror, especially in the country, where one felt oneself isolated and at the mercy of the soldiery; one was almost grateful to the enemy for allowing one to live. I can mention a very significant fact in this connection. The colliers of the Micheroux district have the reputation of utter fearlessness. But I was told this by the priest of La Minerie when he came to warn me that I was accused of shooting at the enemy. He was doing Red Cross work with the Germans, and during the course of Thursday, the 6th August, was in the neighbourhood of Micheroux. 'I saw,' he told me, 'the corpses of several colliers who had just been shot. There was a group of about 40 men there awaiting the same fate. I spoke to the commanding officer and asked him if he was not ashamed of killing innocent people like that. He said that they had been firing at the troops. I swore that they had not, and eventually I obtained their release. I then went to them and said: 'My friends, you see that a priest can yet be of some use. I have obtained your pardon. You are free, but I recommend you not to shoot and not to talk about the forces you have seen here,' and then these poor wretches, mad with joy, threw up their caps and began to shout: 'Long live the Emperor.'

"A few days later, I believe the 17th August, Dr. Deleval, of Charneux, had to take in some superior officers, the very ones who next day ordered the destruction of the village of Julémont. Sentinels were stationed along the avenue which led to the doctor's villa. During the night a shot was heard. A soldier was wounded. There was at once a great commotion. There was talk of burning down the village, and petrol was being thrown on the door of the villa. But the doctor, who knows German, asked to examine the wound. He proved that the bullet was a German one and fired at close range. Apparently a soldier had asked his neighbour to wound him in the foot so as to get out of fighting. Several of the wounded who were being nursed at Valdieu were wounded in this way, so a priest of the community told me. The doctor's demonstration was so convincing that the officers decided to spare the village.

"Two farmers from near Herve were forced to accompany the troops with their wagon. On the way one of them asked a soldier: 'Do you think that we shall be allowed to return?' 'Yes,' said the soldier. 'You will get back, but that man there won't,' and he pointed to the officer who was marching at the head of the detachment.

"M. Ruwet, the provincial councillor at Thimister, told me that one night the sentries posted on the Battice road fired at a German motor which did not stop when challenged. At once the soldiers at Thimister raised the cry that civilians had been shooting at them and wished to burn down the village. The commanding officer who was billeted on M. Ruwet, knowing what had happened, said to his host: 'Come with me; we will try to calm them down,' and on his return he said: 'I have had a bad quarter of an hour. I thought I should not be able to control my men. You see how evilly disposed they are.'

"I met lately at Abbé Poels' house, at Velten, the doctor from Heerlen, who made this remark to me: 'It is not surprising that the soldiers believed they saw *francs-tireurs* everywhere. At the frontier I spoke to men who had not yet set foot in Belgium and were terrified. They believed that they would be fired at from every house.' As to the incident at Charneux,

he told me : 'Near Bernlau I myself attended to soldiers who were supposed to have been wounded by civilians, but I was able to establish that the wounds were caused by German bullets !'

"Soldiers firing at their officers out of revenge, or getting themselves shot in the foot so as to escape service, or imagining that every shot was fired by a civilian—these things explain the belief in *francs-tireurs*. These regrettable mistakes have apparently occurred in many districts. At first we Belgians believed that there were *francs-tireurs*; the Germans told their lying stories with such assurance and with such a wealth of detail that one never thought of disbelieving them. One was agreeably surprised later on to meet alive and well compatriots whom the enemy said they had punished with death.

"I declare upon my honour as a priest that this report is absolutely sincere. The facts that I have narrated are beyond question, and I am sure that an honest inquiry would establish the accuracy of my information.

"I have the honour to subscribe myself, M. le Ministre,

"GUILLAUME VOISIN,

"D.D. Louvain, Priest of Battice."

CAPELLEN.

Capellen, a small village to the north of Tirlemont, has 857 inhabitants. No civilians were killed, but eight houses were burned down and 52 were looted by the Germans after the retreat of the Belgian forces on the 18th August, 1914.

Captain Strauss, of the 12th Grenadier Regiment, whose deposition is reproduced in the "White Book" (App. 48), states the circumstances in which the houses were set on fire. While passing through the village his men were fired at from a house and a garden. A search was made, but no soldier was found. There were two men and nine women and children in the house, all unarmed, and no weapon was found. The shots remaining inexplicable, the house was set on fire. The civilians were released the next day.

This deposition, which exonerates the inhabitants from taking part in the struggle between the rearguard, which was covering on the 18th August, 1914, the retreat of the Belgian army on the Gette, and the Germans, is interesting from a double point of view. It shews in a striking manner the way in which the Germans waged war in Belgium, ravaging towns and villages every time the Belgian or Anglo-French troops made them a base of defence. It also shews that the German Government does not repress such excesses, and that it even tries to base charges against the people upon such incidents. The insertion of Captain Strauss' deposition in the "White Book" has hardly any other object—unless, indeed, it is meant to illustrate German mildness, the civilians suspected but not convicted of hostile acts not having been shot at Capellen.

CHAMPION.*

The village of Champion, not far from Namur, was sacked. Fifty-nine houses were destroyed and a great many others looted.

The "White Book" has two documents relating to what happened in this commune. The first is the deposition, taken at Berlin, of the Sergeant of Landwehr Ebers, who, having been slightly wounded, was on the 24th August in the Convent of Champion, which had been turned into a hospital (App. 36). The second is the joint evidence of Sergeant Schultze, a corporal, and five grenadiers of the 93rd Infantry Regiment, taken at Berlin on the 18th September, 1914.

According to these depositions, about 10 p.m. on the 24th August, 1914, brisk firing was directed against the principal entrance and the windows of the Convent of Champion, which was full of wounded. The marksmen were civilians, who were firing from the windows and garrets of the houses facing the side wing of the convent. The nuns had taken refuge in the cellars. Having been made to come out, they were placed in the midst of a group of doctors, stretcher-bearers, and slightly wounded men, which proceeded towards the door of the convent. Both a French and a Belgian surgeon, who were prisoners, had already spoken to the people from the doorway and urged them to be quiet. The firing slackened, only to become brisker when the slightly wounded soldiers, helped by the men of a small-arms ammunition column which was near the convent, went into the street in order to visit the houses.

* See also, as to the affair at Champion, the report of the Austrian priest Aloijnsins van den Bergh at p. 315, and the note of Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, at p. 331.

It lasted until nearly 11 o'clock. During the night ten of the houses from which firing had occurred were set on fire. Next morning the marks of many shots were seen on the exterior of the convent, and, moreover, in a house opposite its principal entrance, where a priest lived, there were found 40 cases of dynamite and 30 boxes of cartridges. The priest remained for two days under the guard of the ammunition column and was then set at liberty.

As a matter of fact, the civilian population had no hand in the affair. This is proved by the following deposition of M. Ernest Claes :—

"On the morning of the 24th August, a German ambulance took me from the trenches before Bonnine to the Convent of the Sisters of Providence, which had been turned into a field hospital. I had a bullet wound in the right side, one in the back and two in the left shoulder. Sub-Lieutenant G. Mathieu, who was in command of my platoon, was also taken in the ambulance.

"I had been lying for some minutes on the straw in one of the rooms by the side of Victor Stroobants, of Louvain, who belonged to my company, when a German non-commissioned officer, Carl Magersuppe,* inspector of the hospital, came and asked me if I would help him as interpreter. He had heard that I knew German.

"I was placed on a chair in the passage, near the entrance. Every time the German hospital attendants had to speak to the nuns they came to me. I made the acquaintance of many of the Sisters, and the German doctors, including the chief surgeon, Dr. Blum, commanding the 2nd Field Hospital of the 11th Army Corps. The three or four doctors were very busy. Many wounded were being brought in, chiefly from the Marchevelette and Cognelée forts. Most of them were fearfully burnt. They all passed by the place where I was sitting. Captain Duchâteau, from Fort Marchevelette, wounded in the left shoulder and right leg, and his lieutenant, badly burnt on his body and hands, were both there. The Germans spoke of the former with the highest praise. They had been told that he had heroically stayed at his post until the fort was completely destroyed. I also made the acquaintance of Lieutenant Némery, the surgeon of the fort, and Lieutenant Janssen, the surgeon of Cognelée Fort. Neither of these was wounded.

"About midday I suddenly fainted. Then my wounds were dressed and I was placed on a chair in the yard in front of one of the windows of the passage. Through this open window I translated everything asked of me.

"All the passages and available rooms were full of wounded. The floor was sticky with blood—it was a warm August day—and the cries and moans of the wounded were heard everywhere.

"The kitchen was just beside me. It was entered through a verandah. I chatted with the Sisters who were working there.

"The convent belfry was in front of me. The clock had stopped at 2 o'clock. I remained in this place all the afternoon until the evening.

"Dusk was falling—I don't know the exact time—when suddenly about five shots were heard in the great garden which runs down the slope of the hill, on which the convent stands, as far as the main road from Eghezée to Namur. I heard them quite distinctly. No one took any notice of them, not even the German soldiers walking in the yard. Again, a couple of shots sounded in the garden behind the chapel, and someone shouted '*Francs-tireurs!*'

"Immediately the German soldiers rushed indoors. The guard posted at the entrance was ordered outside (I distinctly heard the command), and all officers, soldiers and attendants took up positions in passages 9 and 3 near the entrance to the yard. Firing, still from the garden side, went on for about two minutes. There was a short stop and then it began again for two or three minutes only, and then ceased entirely. We heard no bullet whistle and saw no one. Above passage number 12 I saw German soldiers rushing downstairs. Up there were the rooms of the staff of the field hospital (the small rooms of the boarders). I was in front of the kitchen door, asking myself where these *francs-tireurs* could have sprung from. By the side of me was a priest, one of the spiritual directors of the nuns, I believe. He was between 40 and 50 years of age. The Sisters, who had been very busy in the kitchen preparing a meal, had run away in a fright.

"All this happened like a flash of lightning.

"The convent was searched by an officer and two soldiers, preceded by two Sisters carrying a lantern. In the cellars they found two or three men and some women and children of the village who had taken refuge in the convent and had been there for some days.

"At this time the flames of the houses and farms that had been set alight were mounting high above the convent. They must have been fired at the first moment of the shooting, before it was known what was really happening. Otherwise the flames could not have made such progress.

"While they were searching the convent I asked Dr. Blum if I might go round the village with some of the soldiers to see what had happened and to calm the inhabitants if there were disturbances. He consented, and I went under an escort of five soldiers. An officer said to me at the entrance to the convent: 'You are running the risk of being killed, for they won't recognise you.' We turned to the left in the direction of the church. At the large horse-pond by the road side we met a small body of soldiers leaving the village.

"'What is happening in the village?'

* His address is Carl Magersuppe, von Humboldtstrasse, 7, Cassel. He gave me this address himself.

" 'Nothing. We have seen absolutely nothing. They are shutting up all civilians in the church.'

" 'Where did they fire from ?'

" 'In the convent, down there behind the wall. Nowhere in the village. Some of us then fired in the air, as we were ordered.'*

" 'Why were the farms set alight, then ?'

" 'Der Befehl.'†

" All this I learned by question and answer from the soldiers. Nobody had seen or heard of any *francs-tireurs*. We remained a short time longer in the ruddy light of a burning house.

" On my return to the convent I had to inform the Sisters that they all, without exception, even those who were ill in bed, were to go to the chapel. These poor creatures were almost mad with terror. They had already been told that they would be turned out and the convent burned.

" They were sitting on the left of the gallery, a prey to mad terror, as they saw through the windows the flames belching from the houses and the sparks flying. They believed that the convent was already burning. Gathered round the Reverend Mother, they implored me to ask for permission for them to leave. In the passage by the little bedrooms, I saw an old nun sitting in a chair ready to be carried away.

" A non-commissioned officer made them come together. He and I were alone in the chapel with the Sisters. The doors had to remain shut. I perceived that the German was amused at their terror.

" I then had to translate, phrase by phrase, the following speech :—

" 'The Germans have no desire to do any harm, but the *francs-tireurs* force them to take severe measures. In the convent *francs-tireurs* have been firing and several wounded have been killed,‡ and the Germans would have been justified in shooting the Sisters. But I have spoken in your favour (a lie), and I may be able to save your lives. But you must pass the night in the chapel, and to-morrow you will go to tell people about here that they must not shoot Germans. The nuns must wear an armlet with the Red Cross.'

" This man was playing an abominable comedy. He had even had most of the lights put out : *Es muss ein bisschen schauderhaft aussehen*.§ This man had no orders whatever. When we left the chapel he laughed. Later on the Sisters got permission to go to bed.

" I found Carl Magersuppe in the kitchen. My wounds had begun to bleed freely and I was quite exhausted. He first helped me to regain consciousness and then said : 'Do you now know what all this *verdammte Schiesserei* ¶ was ?' The electricity plant had been suddenly put on full to provide lighting for the whole convent. The electrician had departed the evening before for Namur and did not return. One of their men (a Berlin chauffeur) had been at work on the plant. At one time it had made a few short explosions. The soldiers who were wandering in the garden to gather fruit had probably imagined that these were shots and had fired at random. They had told Carl Magersuppe this themselves ; hence all the trouble. 'There was no question of *francs-tireurs* at all.' In fact, at nightfall they were afraid of being deprived of light, which would have been serious on such a night. The Sister who taught natural science had been called in to advise. Afterwards the chauffeur who had made the plant work came to the kitchen and gave us a detailed account of what happened.

" That night Carl Magersuppe and I slept together by the side of the stairs to the Sisters' dormitories.||

" Next day all was quiet. Not another word was said about *francs-tireurs*. During the morning I went into the village as far as the church. Thanks to a little fib, the sentries let me pass as an interpreter. I had been told that several prisoners belonging to my company were there with Major Rousseau, and at the kitchen I had even got some food for the Major. But the prisoners had been removed. I saw the houses gutted by fire. Not a soul in the village, save a man in his dotage who was sitting alone on a doorstep. A dead dog was lying at his feet. All the villagers were shut up in the church. Just as I arrived a cart came through the graveyard, bringing them food : green apples and pears from the neighbouring orchards. I saw a cleric, the priest, I think, standing in the midst of them.

" That day, or the day after, I, with Carl Magersuppe, visited *all* the rooms, including the water-closets, which opened on to the garden or the streets. Nowhere was there any sign of a bullet, save in a corner of the garden where the windows were broken, and we found some pieces of shrapnel which had fallen into the garden during the first bombardment and had knocked down a tree covered with foliage in an alley of lime trees.

* I remember this important point very clearly.

† "Orders."

‡ No one, German or otherwise, was wounded or killed in the convent. Next day I saw several wounded civilians there. A man with a bullet wound in his arm, two young boys, one wounded in the left shoulder and the other in the knee, and a little child of two with a bullet in the left thigh. But I do not know whether they were wounded on the night in question.

§ "It ought to look rather gruesome."

¶ "Damned shooting."

|| Before leaving Champion I gave Carl Magersuppe a letter of thanks for his kindness to the French and Belgian wounded. It was signed by Captain Duchâteau, Lieutenant Mathieu, Dr. Stroobants, Pierre de Meyer (the civilian doctor of Champion), a French non-commissioned officer, and myself.

"Several days later Dr. Janssen and Dr. Némery departed for Namur.

"I fell very ill and was treated by Dr. Köhler, professor of surgery at Coburg. He chatted with me several times, and, speaking of *francs-tireurs* and what had happened at Champion, he said: 'It is possible that there was a mistake here, but it has been clearly proved in many places that civilians fired at our men.'

"I can name all the persons mentioned as witnesses of what I have described.

"I carefully noted in my diary these events in detail and also the names of all the people. But this diary was taken from me at the hospital at Gotha by Sergeant-Major Roth (No. 2 Barrack).

"I declare on oath that all that I have written above is true.

"DR. ERNEST CLAES."

CHARLEROI.

In the area of the town of Charleroi 160 houses were burned down in the Rue du Grand Central, the Mons Road, and the Boulevard Audent, which are the finest streets in the town.

This arson was systematically carried out under the orders of German officers.

Inhabitants, including Dr. Cothon and Dr. de Ponthière, the latter wearing a Red Cross brassard, were taken by the troops and forced to march in front of them.

About 40 inhabitants perished. Some were burnt alive in their houses or suffocated in their cellars, where they had taken refuge. Others were shot as they tried to escape from their burning houses.

The "White Book" makes no allusion to these outrages by the German army.

It contains only one deposition by a private in the Landwehr, Alwin Chaton, of the 78th Reserve Infantry Regiment, who alleges that, during the fierce fighting in the streets of Charleroi between the French and Germans, he saw three civilians round a German dragoon who was lying on the ground, still moving his legs. One had a long bloody knife in his hand. The dragoon's eyes were gouged out. The dragoon's body was sending out a thick smoke. He had doubtless been sprinkled with some inflammable liquid (App. 63).

That is all that the editors of the "White Book" have found to say in justification of the destruction and murder committed in Charleroi by the German armies. They do not seem to have considered that the improbability of Chaton's story itself should have led to the rejection of his evidence. How can one admit for a moment that when fighting was raging in the principal streets civilians could have accomplished their horrible task without fear of danger up a side street close by (50 or 60 yards)? This story, which is entirely uncorroborated, is obviously the product of a diseased imagination. He also states in his last sentence, without giving any details, that he afterwards saw other corpses on fire, which must have been burnt deliberately, as there was no fire near by. Chaton therefore saw several *autos-da-fé* of this kind, while thousands of German officers and men did not see a single one!

DEYNZE.

The Belgian Commission of Inquiry has received no information as to the destruction or the murders committed by the Germans at Deynze.

The German "White Book" contains a deposition by a Reservist, Gottfried Hilberath, of the 12th Company of the 236th Reserve Infantry Regiment who, on being transferred on the 31st October, 1914, to the hospital at Werne (Germany), declared that on the 25th of the same month, while engaged in digging trenches on the outskirts of Deynze, he and several of his comrades bought some sugar at a shop in the village. He put it in the coffee with which he had filled his water bottle. Next day, after drinking the coffee, he lost consciousness. He was taken to the hospital at Westroosenbeke, where he learned that the other soldiers were also poisoned and that some had died. He does not know what happened to the shopkeeper who sold them the sugar (App. 50).

The publication of such vague and fantastic evidence is characteristic of the spirit in which the "White Book" was compiled. It shows how easily the most scurrilous and unfounded accusations are accepted by the German Government. It is hardly necessary to remark that, if there had been the least appearance of an attempt at poisoning, the German authorities, having regard to the gravity of the matter, would not have failed to hold a serious inquiry and that, instead of a private's statement, the Government would have brought forward the evidence of the doctors who attended to the sick and published the result of the analysis of the poisoned

sugar. It is to be noticed that the deposition of Hilberath is the *only one* in the "White Book" which gives the *direct* evidence of a victim of the so-called Belgian atrocities.

GOUGNIES.

The Commune of Gougnyes (683 inhabitants), at the extreme east of the Province of Hainault, was sacked on the 23rd August, 1914, during the battle of the Sambre.

There was no fighting at Gougnyes. The first troops passed through quietly. Towards the evening of Sunday, the 23rd August, the Germans, alleging that the civilian population had fired at their men, set the village on fire at several points. Seventeen houses were burnt down, in particular a house where M. Piret, Provincial Councillor of Hainault, had established a hospital. Ten French soldiers were burnt alive in it.

Next day but one M. Piret, in spite of his advanced age, was taken out and shot at Le Roux. Two other inhabitants of Gougnyes, M. Thiry, aged 83, and M. Grégoire, aged 56, were also shot.

What does the "White Book" say as to this place? That the lady who owned the Château of Gougnyes had told the German medical officers and the staff of the German ambulances that Provincial Councillor Adelin Piret had distributed among the inhabitants the weapons deposited at the Town Hall. There had also been firing from the village on the columns on the march, so says Dr. Esche, author of the report inserted in App. 33.

This, therefore, is the explanation of the sack of Gougnyes, the burning of the hospital and the murder of M. Piret and two other inhabitants.

Yet there is no doubt that a part at least of this explanation is quite fantastic. The Château of Gougnyes belonged to M. Piret. The lady whom the "White Book" calls "the owner"* of the château must have been one of M. Piret's family. It is obvious that the meaning of the words attributed to her must have been misinterpreted, when one remembers that it was a question of the arms *deposited* by the inhabitants themselves at the Town Hall. The words of the "owner" are nowhere given in the "White Book," which contents itself with reporting them indirectly. This method of quoting Belgian evidence is, we know, characteristic of the "White Book" (see Part I., Chapter III., p. 71). The "owner" evidently was merely stating, in order to clear M. Piret, that he had ordered these weapons to be deposited at the Town Hall.

GOUVY.†

The Belgian Commission of Inquiry has no knowledge of the crimes committed at Gouvy, the place where the Belgian frontier station on the Liège-Luxembourg line is situated.

A report of the staff of the 64th Infantry Brigade states that the brigade was received in a friendly manner by the people of Gouvy when it arrived on the 5th August, 1914. Nevertheless a search made in the station buildings resulted in the discovery in a corner of cases of weapons containing about 300 Browning revolvers and 50 kilos of dynamite. Questioned on the subject of arms and ammunition, the station-master said that there were none in the station. So he was arrested (App. 13.)

It is impossible to see what bearing this has on the alleged *francs-tireurs*. The report of the 64th Brigade mentions no act of hostility imputable to the inhabitants. What is there unusual in the fact that arms and ammunition were found in the warehouse of a customs station? What is there extraordinary even in the station-master, on the day after the declaration of war, anxious not to reveal anything about them to the enemy, declaring that there were no articles of such a nature in the warehouse?

Moreover, it appears from information received by the Minister of Railways that additions were being made to Gouvy station in August, 1914. In order to widen the track, explosives were used, which were entrusted to the overseer at Vielsalm. He had placed a certain quantity of tonite in one of the out-buildings of the station. As to the arms, they were in two cases and were a consignment from a house at Liège to Switzerland. When they arrived at Gouvy, on the 3rd August, they were not forwarded because traffic with the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg was suspended. The cases were left at Gouvy and put by the overseer's directions in the warehouse

* *La propriétaire.*

† See also the note by Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur (Appendix, Document ix., p. 331).

with many other packages. The station-master, who had nothing to do with the enlargement, which was under the charge of the technical staff, nor with the handling of goods, may even have been quite ignorant of the existence of explosives and weapons in the station buildings.

HERVE.*

The town of Herve (4,682 inhabitants) was sacked.

About 4 p.m. on 4th August, 1914, a motor car containing German officers entered the town. Messrs. Dechêne, Dieudonné and Gustave Styne, who were on the Malakoff Bridge, made a move to go indoors. The occupants of the motor car hailed them. Without giving them time to answer, they fired at the men. Dechêne was killed and Styne seriously wounded.

Shortly afterwards the troops entered Herve. Next day hostages were taken. Several serious events occurred during the following days, but it was not until Saturday, the 8th August, that the destruction of a great part of the town took place.

About 10 o'clock in the morning of that day fresh troops coming from Germany entered the town, shooting in all directions. They set fire to the station and to Mme. Christophe's house. Mme. Christophe and her daughter were suffocated in the cellar. Mme. Hendrickx, seeing the fire catch her house, ran into the street with a crucifix in her hand; she was killed by rifle-fire.

The killing, arson, and looting went on for several days. About 40 people were killed. Several women were among the victims, in particular: Mme. Christophe-Diet, aged 47; Mlle. Christophe, aged 20; Mme. Hendrickx, aged 40; Mme. Grailet, aged 50; and Mlle. Lecloux, aged 51.

The town was completely sacked, and about 300 houses were destroyed by fire.†

The "White Book" does not mention these assassinations, arsons, and robberies. It publishes a few depositions of soldiers, but there is in none of them any allusion to the doings of the German soldiers at Herve; they relate only to acts of hostility or cruelty to which their men were subjected in the district.

Corporal Funke, of the 2nd Hanoverian Dragoon Regiment, No. 16, relates that at Herve some soldiers of the Magdeburg Field Artillery Regiment pointed out to him the body of a hussar lying near a straw rick. He went to look and found that the hussar's ears and nose were cut off and that his face was slashed all over (App. 57). This is the only deposition as to what happened at Herve. The other evidence relates to occurrences in villages near Herve, to which the witnesses could give no name.

Reservist Voigt, of the 165th Infantry Regiment, declares that on the 6th August he, with seven of his comrades, surprised five Belgian soldiers in a village just behind Herve. They surrendered. They had with them two German hussars, whom they had taken prisoners. One of these hussars pointed out to Voigt the corpse of another hussar hanging from a tree with his nose and ears cut off. The hussars declared that the Belgian soldiers were guilty of the murder and also of the mutilation, and added that, but for the arrival of Voigt and his companions, they themselves would have suffered the same fate. Voigt continues by saying that, on rejoining his company, they were met in a village, the name of which he does not know, by shots which came from the windows and ventilators of the houses. This village lay in the direction of Liège, between Herve and a large colliery. The day before, he adds, his company was engaged in advanced guard fighting to the right of Herve. A wounded *Einjähriger*‡ was left on the scene of the fighting. Next day, passing by again, Voigt saw his body near a garden fence. His eyes were gouged out. On the 7th August, while marching towards Liège, he saw the corpse of a German foot soldier, whose privates had been completely removed and who bore no gunshot wound (App. 55).

Reservist Marks, of the same regiment, declares that he also saw at a village near Herve the body of the *Einjähriger* with his eyes gouged out. He says: "We were convinced that it was done by the villagers." Next day, when they were again passing through the village, they were greeted by shots coming from windows

* See also the letter of Mgr. Rutten, Bishop of Liège (Appendix, Document ix., p. 348).

† See the 17th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry. The list of names of victims, 44 in number, which has been drawn up, is no doubt incomplete. Many disappeared, but a number of the inhabitants have left Belgium and others were taken to Germany. It was with great difficulty that the deaths were ascertained.

‡ One year volunteer.

and ventilators. Orders were given to disarm the inhabitants and to take them prisoners. As the firing continued, six guilty Belgian peasants were shot (App. 55).

Reservist Hartmann, of the same regiment, also saw the *Einjähriger* with his eyes gouged out in a village near Herve. He adds that his company commander, Captain Burkholz, gave orders to the men to search the houses. In the house by the hedge where the body was lying they found a middle-aged man lying on a bed. He pretended to be asleep. He was taken to the officers, who questioned him, and he was then shot. During the march to Liège the witness saw the body of a German infantryman who had been put, head foremost, half way into a muddy pool (*ein morastiges Wasserloch*) (App. 55).

Paul Blankenburg, a private in the 7th Company of the same 165th Infantry Regiment, declares that, in a village west of Herve from the houses of which shots had been suddenly fired on the columns on the march, they found some German wounded, among whom he recognised some men of the 4th Jäger battalion. Some little girls of from 8 to 10 years of age were near the wounded. They were holding some sharp instruments, which were neither knives nor scissors. They were handling these instruments near some wounded who had had the exterior parts of their ears cut off. One of the wounded said that he had been mutilated in that way by the little girls. Blankenburg also gives evidence that farther on during the march a hospital orderly, who was attending a wounded man in a school yard, was killed by a shot fired from the schoolhouse by some inhabitants (App. 56).

Reservist Baldeweg, of the 11th Company of the 35th Infantry Regiment, says that about the 8th August he saw in a village near Verviers horses with their tongues cut out. They were in a stable. He thinks that civilians had mutilated them. The same witness also declares that he saw at a place close to Herve a hussar bound hand and foot to a tree and nailed to it by two strong nails driven through the eyes. He also says that he saw at a farm in the same district an infantryman whose eyes had been gouged out, nose, ears and fingers cut off, and stomach ripped open with the bowels protruding. His chest was also slashed all over by some pointed instrument (App. 58).*

Have the facts stated in these depositions any relation to the sacking of Herve? It would seem not, since, according to the witnesses, most of them occurred outside the town boundaries. But the "White Book" contains no deposition which would tend to give any other explanation for the sacking of the town and the murder of over 40 of its inhabitants. One is therefore forced to the conclusion that it was in consequence of allegations of this kind that the assassinations and the destruction were committed.

Yet, in the first place, most of these declarations are entirely lacking in precision, especially as to the firing. The witnesses are quite incapable of determining exactly where these events occurred. Yet they all declare that they took place on the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th or 10th of August, that is, at a time when the German troops must have expected attacks from Belgian detachments and patrols, basing their defence on the villages in this district. The evidence collected by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry is unanimous in declaring that the civilian population took no part in military operations.

Again, the question must be asked, what credit do the statements of Voigt, Blankenburg and Baldeweg,* who were giving evidence nearly three months after the event, deserve, when one bears in mind their mental condition at the time? The absurd fables they report as to the cruelty committed by the Belgian population are very significant. Either these men are impostors or their morbid state of mind and their obsession concerning *francs-tireurs* have led them to mistake for realities the creations of their imagination.

It is surprising to find such stories in an official publication. The absence of any report establishing the truth of facts, which could not, had they occurred, have been unknown to the officers and surgeons, should have decided the German Government *a priori* to reject such unusual depositions. No doubt it was such stories as these that, at the beginning of the war, provoked the slanderous accusations against the Belgian nation which were current in Germany and were echoed by the Emperor William in his telegram to President Wilson.

The testimony of the German, Private Kurasinski, who was taken prisoner, enables one to form an idea of the way in which the German armies behaved themselves in the Herve district on their entrance into Belgium. Kurasinski, a private in the 20th Infantry Regiment, No. 7 Company, was examined on oath by the French

* See Part I., p. 50.

Lieutenant Loustalot, the deputy Prosecutor of the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, assisted by Sergeant Laborderie, registrar, and Corporal Lafourcade, interpreter. (See pp. 169 and 174). He made the following deposition :—

“ On the 3rd August the 20th Infantry Regiment, to which I belong, left Aix-la-Chapelle for Belgium.* We had hardly crossed the frontier before we found barricades made up of carts, casks, &c. At the first Belgian village (Soiron), where we passed the night, we were told that civilians had shot at the troops from the top of the belfry. We were given orders to fire, but as the 35th German Infantry Regiment was posted at the other end of the village we fired at them, thinking that they were the enemy. On both sides men were wounded by our own fire. As soon as the mistake was discovered, the column set out to march in the direction of Liège. (This was on the 5th August, as near as I can tell.) The 20th Regiment was one of the first, but up to Verviers and in that place nothing in particular occurred. Then we reached the village of Forêt, where there were knapsacks of Belgian soldiers lying heaped up. We found here some prisoners (a priest and five civilians, one being a lad of 17). Looting began. The 20th Regiment began to take all it could find, but about five or six shells were fired at us. As we were told that civilians had been shooting, the order was given to the soldiers that in such cases they were to fire at the inhabitants. We continued our march and we arrived at the next village, where there was a school. The doors of the houses were at once smashed in with our rifle butts; everything was taken: curtains and inflammable articles were heaped together and set on fire. All the houses were burnt. It was while this was going on that the civilians, of whom I told you, were shot, except the priest. I have no doubt about it, as I saw the five corpses myself. A little further on, under the pretext that civilians had fired since (*sic*) a house (I don't know myself whether it was soldiers or civilians who had fired), orders were given to set this house on fire. A woman who was in bed was dragged out, thrown into the flames and burnt alive.

“ We again set out and marched all night long. Next day we came to another village. We also heard shots fired here, coming from some houses at the other end of the village. But the same mistake occurred as at Soiron. The 20th again fired on the 35th, not knowing that they were stationed there. About 10 were killed and 20 wounded. The officers, not wishing to have it said that such a mistake had been made, hastened to assert that civilians had really fired and ordered them all to be killed. This order was obeyed, and there was a frightful butchery. I mean, however, that only men were killed, but all the houses were burnt. The houses where food remained were entered, a meal was prepared, and we gave ourselves up to looting. But some shells began to fall, and the battalion was separated from the rest of the regiment. From shame, a Reserve lieutenant of the 8th Company committed suicide, believing that we had to retreat and return to Verviers. Nevertheless, they left a detachment of 16 men, of whom I was one, to occupy a bridge. There we met a man who made himself known to us as a German spy, speaking German and French, and I am convinced, for I spoke to him, that he also knew a little Polish and Russian. He shewed us a paper signed by the German Government, which appeared to be a passport. After this incident our detachment met five carts under convoy commanded by Lance-Sergeant Schuboth, then the band of the 20th; everyone was going to Eupen and then branching off to Herve. On the way everything was burnt. At Herve everything was burnt except a convent. Everywhere were corpses burnt to a cinder in one heap. (There were about 100, all civilians, including some children). I only saw three living people in the village—an old man, a Sister of Charity, and a girl. As far as Liège, where we went next, there was nothing to mention save a few burnt houses. When we reached Liège the town was already taken. When we arrived I was told that a truck load of wine had been plundered, and I was brought wine to drink. Liège did not seem to have been looted, but on the outskirts I saw a very fine villa which had been ransacked, and the carpets, &c., taken. Then we set out again. Between Liège and Louvain nearly everything had been burnt down, and what had not been burnt, had been plundered. Innumerable bottles were lying on the road and the roadside. Though the villages all seemed to have been looted and burnt, the large towns had not suffered. On the march, Lieutenant Mayer (of No. 7 Company) gave orders that no prisoners were to be made in Belgium, and that all soldiers found were to be killed.

“ At Looz I noticed a poster in three languages, which stated: ‘Everyone who fires will be shot and the houses will be set on fire.’

“ Between Louvain and Liège, in the villages, the furniture was lying pell-mell outside, mixed with innumerable bottles.

“ Past Tervueren, in the Tervueren wood, near Brussels, we came across the Congo Museum, on the door of which was a notice: ‘Entry forbidden,’ signed by a German general. A civilian pointed this notice out to the soldiers and prevented them from going inside.

“ After a very long march, we came to a large cavalry barracks situated at one end of Brussels. We laid down on mattresses for the night, but at some time someone found some immense cellars stocked with food and wine. The men got quite drunk. Everything was ransacked, especially the leather store, and everyone took his share. Next morning, it is true, the sergeant-major, feeling qualms of conscience, came to ask how many bottles had been drunk. After some uninteresting comings and goings, I went with my regiment by bye-ways to Mons. The

* It was at daybreak on the 4th August, 1914, that the first German troops entered Belgium. (Note by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.)

paving had been torn up and the houses partly plundered and burnt. At Mons we learned that the English were there, and we passed the night on a neighbouring hill. Then the artillery and the English machine guns began to fire. The combat lasted an hour. My rifle was broken. The English were forced to retire, but our losses were heavy. We entered Jemappes. Pillage! For the rest, there was nobody left. One of my comrades took a watch. Later we saw about 200 English prisoners in a factory. At last, on the 25th August, we crossed the French frontier, but from that moment the atrocities diminished.

"To sum up, in Belgium I saw a vast number of civilians killed, but only men (except the women and children I have already mentioned). In the villages, three-quarters of the houses were burnt and the rest looted. On the other hand, except at Herve, almost everything in the towns was untouched. In the villages in Belgium and France furniture was put out of doors and empty bottles lay about everywhere. On the doors were inscriptions in chalk (on some, at least), '*Gute Leute—bitte schonen*' ('Well disposed people—please spare them'), then underneath the number of the regiment and company. I myself was ordered to write '7th Company, 20th Regiment.' Between Brussels and Mons the haystacks and some of the houses were burnt down.

"The deposition, having been read over, the witness declared that his answers were correctly taken down, and true, and signed, together with myself, the interpreter, and the registrar.

" R. LABORDERIE,
 " PAUL LAFOURCADE,
 " LOUSTALOT,
 " A. KURASINSKI."

HOUGAERDE.

Four residents were killed; 50 houses burned and 100 looted.

Captain Caspari, of the 3rd Company of the 75th Infantry Regiment, states that on the outskirts of Hougaerde a man in clerical attire met them and told him that there were no Belgian troops in the village, and that the inhabitants were peaceable. Nevertheless, he came across a barricade at a turning in the street and was at once subjected to a lively fire from all sides, in which civilians participated. He declares that he then saw armed civilians run away across the gardens, and that several of his men were wounded by small shot (App. 47).

Here again the German commander was a victim of the hallucination which caused the invaders to see the acts of *francs-tireurs* in every ambush into which they fell. Caspari behaved, even admitting that the inhabitants took part in the fight, as if the chief struggle had been against civilians. In this officer's statement there is no word about the presence at Hougaerde of Belgian soldiers, and one must read it with great care in order to notice that Caspari does not deny that there was a brush with enemy soldiers.

The truth is that the Bridge of La Gette, in the village of Hougaerde, was, on the morning of the 18th August, 1914, defended by an outpost of the 4th Company of the 2nd Battalion of the 3rd Chasseurs à pied, under the command of Volunteer Sergeant Dominique de Neef.

This detachment was posted in the village, where it had erected a barricade. The men lay in ambush, partly behind the barricade and partly in the houses.

When the 3rd Company of the 75th German Regiment advanced through the village, they forced the priest of Autgaerden to march in front (see the 15th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry), thinking that, if Belgian troops were there, they would hold their fire.* But at a turn of the street the Germans suddenly found themselves 30 or 40 yards from the barricade and the Belgians opened fire. The priest of Autgaerden was struck by a bullet and killed.

The inhabitants, who had taken refuge in their cellars, took to flight when they saw the Belgian troops retire. The captain mistook these peaceful fugitives for *francs-tireurs*. The part of the village where the Belgian soldiers had organised a defence was burnt down after their retreat, and consequently without any military necessity.

LESSINES (LESSEN).

Willi Kandt, aged 31, a volunteer in the 2nd Company of the 201st Reserve Infantry Regiment, states (App. 49) that on the march to Lessines his regiment was fired at from two farms which were set on fire. In the evening of the 20th October, 1914, the rear companies of the regiment, passing through Lessines, were greeted on all sides by shots fired from the houses and the church tower. Four men were wounded. The artillery were ordered to fire on the tower, and the church caught alight. A non-commissioned officer and eight men who were making a search

* Captain Caspari says on this point: "My request to conduct us through Hougaerde obviously did not please the man (in clerical attire), but he complied."

in the tower apparently perished in the flames. On the same day a civilian was shot because he had some cartridges in his pocket. Next day shots were fired from a farm, where no one was found, and it was immediately set on fire. But the corpse of a *franc-tireur* was found in the ruins. As the enemy forces had left the district, the shots could only have been fired by civilians.

This deposition, so exceptionally precise, is absolutely incorrect. The incidents, it would seem, are delusions of the witness. From the beginning of the war up to the 4th June, 1915, nothing out of the way occurred at Lessines. Not only was there no hostile act committed, but, in contrast to what happened in so many other places, no excesses were committed by the German troops. This is established by the following deposition of M. G. Delaunoit :—

“ 27th July, 1915. M. Georges Henn Delaunoit, assistant station-master at Lessines, aged 25, appeared before me, Chevalier Ernst de Bunswijk, Secretary of the Commission of Inquiry, and made the following declaration :—

“ The only important transits of German troops through Lessines took place between the 23rd August and the beginning of September. These came either from Bas-Silly and Ghislenghien on their way to Frasnes-lez-Buissenal, or from the direction of Grammont on the way towards Renaix.

“ We never heard at Lessines of any hostile act on the part of the inhabitants nor of any act of violence on the part of the German troops towards the civilian population. After the passage of the troops a garrison of about 500 men remained at Lessines.

“ The inhabitants, during the whole of my stay at Lessines, which I did not leave until the 4th June, were never subjected to any violation of the laws and usages of war. No destruction was committed. The church and its belfry are intact.

“ In the whole district there has been no damage.

“ The deposition, having been read over, the witness adheres to it and signs.

“ G. DELAUNOIT.”

The example of Lessines is characteristic. It shows how lightly the German Government accepts the truth of unverified evidence. What weight can be given to an inquiry which reports incidents, the truth of which has never been verified, when the German Government had every facility for taking that precaution ?

MONCEAU-SUR-SAMBRE.*

The commune of Monceau-sur-Sambre was delivered up to sack on Saturday, the 22nd August, 1914.

Two hundred and fifty-one houses were entirely destroyed by fire. Sixty-two were looted. Here, as everywhere else, the arson was methodically carried out. Groups of soldiers smashed open the doors and windows, whilst others followed, throwing inflammable materials inside—pastilles, grenades, petrol and paraffin.

Twelve residents of Monceau-sur-Sambre were shot ; 28 were murdered as they came out of their houses ; 30 others received wounds which eventually caused their death. By 4th November, 1914, 70 persons of all ages and of both sexes had perished.

Neither women nor children nor old men were spared. The Gérard family—the father, an official of the State Railways, the mother and a child aged eight—were murdered. The woman was shot in the yard of the house at close range. The father, holding his son's hand, took refuge in the garden. A German soldier saw them, and they were both shot dead.

An old man of 77 was shot as he was coming out of his burning house.

The “ White Book ” gives as to these events the depositions of Captain Leon von Guaita, of the 2nd Reserve Uhlan Regiment, Sergeant Hermann Hammermeister and Trooper Westphal (App. 46). The first-named states that on the 22nd August he was leading 25 Uhlans, when he was fired at in Rue Neuve in Monceau-sur-Sambre from the windows and cellars of the houses. One Uhlan was killed and a lieutenant and four Uhlans were wounded. The officer is sure that the firing came from civilians, and states that the map that he had in his hand was pierced by two small shot. Sergeant Hammermeister, who was one of the patrol, says that his impression was that two volleys were first fired at the front of the detachment and that then shooting from the houses took place. He saw a civilian fire a revolver but saw no soldier. Westphal is certain that he saw in a house from which firing occurred a civilian with a rifle in his hand.

These depositions are unconvincing and are formally contradicted by the evidence, collected by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry, which shows that the

* See the 22nd Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

conduct of the German troops was inexplicable. The shots which were fired at the troops as they entered the commune of Monceau-sur-Sambre, during the fighting on the Sambre between the French and German armies, came from French detachments hidden in the streets of Monceau-sur-Sambre, and in particular from machine guns posted on the Sambre Bridge.

This is clearly shewn by the following report to the Belgian Commission of Inquiry :—

“The German troops advancing from the direction of Roux were announced at Monceau-sur-Sambre about 9 a.m. on Saturday, the 22nd August. Preceded by Uhlans, they made their entry into the commune under the fire of French soldiers posted in a wood near the road from Monceau to Souvret.

“About 60 Germans were wounded, and at once sent to Courcelles, where they were attended to.

“The Germans reached the commune therefore while fighting. According to their tactics, it was necessary at all costs to terrify the population. As the French soldiers had not shewn themselves, this was a splendid opportunity for developing their favourite theme: ‘Civilians have fired at German soldiers; their repression must be terrible.’

“This is what they did.

“It is unnecessary to say that at the first shot all the inhabitants took refuge in their cellars.

“When they reached the first houses in the Rue de Trazegnies, they began to shoot through the windows of the houses, to break open the doors with rifle butts and with axes which certain German foot soldiers carry for this express purpose.

“I was present during their exploits, having been taken prisoner, and I must confess that they were past-masters.

“The windows flew into atoms. The Germans entered the houses, yelling like savages, forced the inhabitants out, and took them all—men, women and children—prisoners. All the houses in the Rue de Trazegnies were set on fire. Two hundred and fifty-seven houses were burnt.

“During this time several Uhlans were venturing through the various streets.

“Eighteen (I counted them) reached the Mons Road and entered the Rue Neuve, which is in Marchienne-au-Pont.

“They were greeted by a French machine gun, posted on the Sambre Bridge. Several were killed and wounded. The rest of the band turned round and joined the main body of the army, which was stationed above the Rue de Trazegnies, near the Ruau School.

“As I live near the Rue Neuve, I saw the Uhlans reach the Mons Road, and then I went down into my cellar. The French gun was no longer heard. I went into my garden, whence I heard shouts and cries. I saw women and children, driven out of their burning houses, get over the wall of M. Thiébaut’s, the burgomaster’s, house. They came to beg protection. The burgomaster gave them permission to take refuge in the outbuildings of his house. I also went there. We had hardly got there when the redoubled blows of rifle butts sounded at the main entrance. M. Thiébaut, being near by, opened it.

“He was at once seized.

“I was about 20 yards away, and was covered by two German soldiers, who made signs to me to come forward with my hands up. We, and the residents of the adjoining houses, were pushed and hustled out, and we all, men, women and children, were gathered together at the entrance to the Rue Neuve, where the French had been firing. Luckily for us they were no longer firing.

“There were also made prisoner Lebrun, the notary, Deglimes and Thiébaut, advocates, Mouchart, an exchange agent, and Bastin, an engineer. They made us march between foot and horse, like criminals, with our hands up.

“The soldiers struck us with butt-ends and bayonets. The Uhlans pushed their horses into us and struck us with their lances. I saw a man’s face lacerated by lance cuts.

“They made us walk along the Rue de Trazegnies in the midst of the flames. The houses on both sides of the street were alight.

“When we got near the Ruau schools we were searched. Needless to say we were the object of sarcasm and insult from the soldiers stationed there. No weapons were found on us, but they took our pocket knives and the money of some of us.

“A colonel came and told us that we were going to be shot for firing at the soldiers.

“M. Bastin, who knew German, interrupted to say that no civilian had fired at the soldiers, the inhabitants having no weapons at their disposal. He also asked that a selection should be made from the hostages, saying rightly that the residents in the Mons Road could not have fired on the Germans, as the latter had not yet passed along that road. This powerful argument secured the release of all the residents in that road, but those in the Rue de Trazegnies were kept.

“We had not gone 50 yards when a captain questioned us and again made us prisoners.

“M. Bastin told him that the colonel had allowed us to return home. It was of no avail, and they made us sit on the grass, surrounded by sentries.

“We remained there from mid-day until 7 p.m. The soldiers looked upon us as strange animals. Some said we were going to be shot, others that we should be formed into a company and be made to march at the head of the troops. A delightful prospect!

"During this period the captain made a pretence at investigation. He questioned a young man by me, told him that he was a Belgian soldier and that he was going to have him shot at once. "This unfortunate man, who was wearing a little white vest and had not had time to put on a coat, in vain denied it. It was no good. He was made to come out and was placed on one side. He was a mathematician named Georges Radu.

"The officer then asked his men if they recognised any of the civilians who had fired at them. They chose several haphazard, for it is quite clear that no one had done so. In this way they took five civilians out of our group.

"The captain led these unfortunate men to a brickworks, followed by a firing squad.

"We heard the sound of firing; the soldiers returned to finish their meal, appearing quite pleased with themselves for shooting defenceless Belgians.

"While this was going on others were playing gramophones and concertinas that they had taken from the neighbouring houses.

"All the soldiers were drinking wine, which they had found while plundering the houses.

"M. Thiébaud, the burgomaster, wishing to plead for his townsfolk, was kicked; one soldier even took him by the neck to throw him down. All this without any objection from his officer. The burgomaster was then taken to the Château of Monceau, M. Houtart's, and kept as hostage. He remained sitting on a staircase for a day and a night without food or drink.

"About 7 p.m. the soldiers were ordered to get ready.

"They made us get up and placed us in fours among the soldiers, followed by eight men with loaded rifles.

"They warned us that, if a single shot were fired by soldier or civilian, we should all be shot. Four civilians were placed at the head of the army with instructions to lead the column to Montigny-le-Tilleul.

"As they came near the station at Marchienne-au-Pont the German soldiers, seeing some civilians in the street, fired at them, fortunately without effect. We continued to march in the midst of the flames, having to step aside from time to time to avoid the bodies of civilians and horses lying in the streets. At last we reached Montigny. We were again searched and then shut up (about 100 in number) in a little barn, which was lit by a lamp. Half an hour later another 50 people from Montigny were thrust in—young men, old men, women and infants in arms, all half dressed and dragged from sleep. The children were crying, suffocated in the place where there was scarcely room for 50 people.

"We were so crushed against one another that we could not move. The heat was intolerable. The children cried so much that about 11 o'clock they made the women and children go out.

"The old men were released about 3 o'clock, and the residents of Montigny about 5 o'clock, but no one had pity on those from Monceau.

"During the night five more of us were taken and shot against the wall of M. Bailleux's property. We saw the corpses when we left the barn about 2 in the afternoon.

"It is unnecessary to add that we were without food or drink from 11 a.m. on Saturday till 2 p.m. on Sunday.

"When the semi-official inquiry was made, it appeared that no civilian had fired at the German soldiers.

"The Germans went so far as to allege that the burgomaster had distributed 5,000 military rifles among the townsfolk. This allegation is unfounded, since placards had for a long time been published throughout the commune ordering all the inhabitants to deposit all their weapons at the Town Hall.

"Some days after the Landsturm arrived, and the officers took the sporting guns and passed their time in shooting in the neighbourhood.

"The searches made by the Germans in all the houses failed to discover the smallest weapon.

"At Monceau 12 men were shot; the others were killed in their houses or gardens.

"A young man of 17, named Malghem, was killed before his mother's eyes, having come to protect her.

"Several inhabitants, including MM. Robat and Thomas, were killed in their gardens.

"Two hundred and fifty-seven houses were burnt at Monceau.

"At Marchienne-au-Pont everything was looted at M. Bailleux's house, where a Red Cross hospital had been set up. Wines were put into cases and loaded on carts, as also were bedding and furniture.

"All the large farms round about Gozée and Thuillies were looted and their fine horses taken."

Once again the civilian population was made responsible for acts of war and for the resistance offered by regular troops to the advance of the invading armies.

PEISSANT.

The Commission of Inquiry has had no information as to events at the little village of Peissant (738 inhabitants). The "White Book" contains one deposition relating to this place.

Lieutenant von Manstein, of the 10th Uhlan Regiment, states that on the 24th August, 1914, he found the doors and shutters of all the houses at Peissant fastened and provided with loopholes. At the various entrances to the village there were strong barricades. The inhabitants refused to clear him a passage. Why? The witness is careful to explain himself, for he says that the people knew that he wished to escape from a company of English infantry posted near the village.

The struggle here had a military character, which was so obvious that the witness himself states that next morning the English artillery fired at the houses occupied by the 1st squadron of the 1st Uhlan Regiment and the 1st squadron of the 4th Dragoon Regiment. According to Manstein the inhabitants during the night had pointed these houses out to the English (App. 52).

The witness mentions no shooting by civilians, and no search resulting in the discovery of arms or ammunition in the houses.

RETINNE.*

The village of Retinne (1,830 inhabitants) was sacked on the 6th August after the attack by the 27th and 165th Infantry Regiments on the gap between Forts Evegnée and Fléron.

The fighting was severe. The German General von Wussow, Colonel Krüger, Majors Hildebrandt and Ribesalm, Lieutenant Vogt and many men fell on the field of battle. They were buried at Liery on a hill overlooking the road and in the cemetery of Retinne.

The Germans used the church tower as an observation post. Fort Fléron respected the tower, as it was flying the Red Cross flag. The church itself had been turned into a hospital.

When the Belgian troops, overwhelmed by numbers, retired, the German army advanced on Liège. A rear-guard, arriving at Retinne at this time, set on fire about 15 houses and killed 41 civilians. Four were also accidentally killed by shells from Fort Fléron.

The "White Book" has two depositions concerning the occurrences at Retinne.

The first comes from the Reserve Staff Surgeon, Dr. Rehm, of the 3rd Battalion of the 165th Infantry Regiment, who states that on the 6th August, 1914, a hospital flying the Red Cross flag was continually fired at. The shots could only have come from civilians, as there were no longer any enemy troops about, but the marksmen, being well hidden, could not be seen. When fresh German troops arrived at Retinne in the evening, Dr. Rehm had a search made in the houses. He only found civilians—dozens of men of all ages, but only a few women and no children. Rehm was therefore under the impression that the firing had been arranged beforehand (App. 4).

The search did not result in either arms or ammunition being discovered.

The second deposition is by Reserve Sub-Lieutenant Böhme, of the 165th Infantry Regiment. Böhme states that at Retinne an officer of a Rhenish regiment shewed him a notice (*Schein*) found in the Town Hall of a place near by. This notice was an appeal by the Belgian Government to the population, asking them to oppose armed resistance to the invasion of the country. A reward was even promised and the amount of it stated (App. 53).

Here again one sees the flimsy nature of the charge, which no doubt caused the murder of the unfortunate inhabitants of Retinne. Not only were there Belgian troops at Retinne on the 6th August, but they inflicted heavy losses on the German regiments. These troops, very few in number, belonged to the 14th Line Regiment. (Report of the Staff of the 3rd Belgian Division). To defend the three gaps, Pontisse-Barchon, Barchon-Evegnée, and Evegnée-Fléron, the Belgians had only 1,500 men available.

It was on a mere impression that, without examination or verdict, 41 people were killed.

As to Sub-Lieutenant Böhme's assertion, it is hardly necessary to contradict it. The Belgian Government never called upon the civilian population to resist, much less encouraged such resistance by offering a reward. The document found by the Rhenish officer to which Böhme alludes may have been either the circular of the 4th August, 1914, addressed to the communal authorities (see Appendix on p. 289), or a copy of the Royal Decree of the 5th August, calling up the reserve of the Civic Guard (see p. 14), but neither of these documents was directed towards instigating the civilian population to take part in the operations (see also p. 39).

* See also the letter of the Bishop of Liège (Appendix, Document IX., p. 347).

ROSSIGNOL.*

Rossignol, a little village in (Belgian) Luxemburg, had before the war 948 inhabitants, dwelling in 218 houses.

The village was sacked at the time of the fighting on the Semois, between the French and German armies, on the 22nd and 23rd August.

One can form an idea of the extent of the ravages of the German soldiers by reading the following account, which has been sent to the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

"At Rossignol the fire spared nothing. Everything was burnt. They commenced executions, then thought better of it, and 117 men and one woman, whose husband had found death several hours earlier, were taken away into exile. They covered, under a strong escort, the 20 kilometres that separated them from Arlon. They spent the night there, and about 8 o'clock the next morning these 118 persons were all shot in groups of ten in the sight of the terrified Arlonnais. The last who were placed against the wall had seen all the others fall, and the 118th victim was poor Mme. Huriaux, wife of a well-known manufacturer and mother of three children, who fell bravely crying 'Vive la France.'"

The Commission of Inquiry has a list of the names of 105 of these victims and a schedule of 73 of the houses that were methodically set on fire.

The "White Book" is silent on this massacre and destruction. It is content with reproducing:—

(i) Three lines of a report by Major Guhr, of the 2nd battalion of the 157th Infantry Regiment, according to whom a corporal was wounded at Rossignol by a shot gun fired by a civilian on the evening of 22nd August (App. 23).

(ii) A statement by Captain Rothe, of the 62nd Infantry Regiment, who declares that civilians fired at soldiers as they went to draw water (App. 28).

(iii) A report by Captain Sternberg, commanding the 2nd Medical Company of the Sixth Army Corps, who states that while passing at Rossignol on the 23rd August, 1914, he was told by an infantry soldier that there was the body of a German lying in a house. He stated that the body bore the mark of a slight wound and that the head of the soldier was burnt away (*verbrannt*). A few yards off was a half empty bottle of petrol and a bottle of benzine. Captain Sternberg draws the conclusion that the inhabitants dragged the wounded man into the house, poured petrol and benzine on to his head and set light to it (App. 61).

The vagueness of the statements of Major Guhr and Captain Rothe makes it impossible to check them. Moreover, these two officers do not seem to have been eye-witnesses, but to have repeated the story told to them, no doubt by their men.

Sternberg and Guhr make no mention whatever of the measures of repression that were taken. Rothe is content with saying that "the civilians"—without any other description—"were then taken prisoners by the men of Regiment No. 157."

Assuming these facts to be proved, how can they excuse the abominable massacre and destruction of which the German troops were guilty?

STADEN.

The country town of Staden (5,475 inhabitants) suffered much during the fighting that preceded the battles of the Yser and of Ypres in October, 1914.

Many inhabitants were murdered.

The "White Book" publishes the statement of Otto Biernirth, a non-commissioned officer in the 213th Reserve Infantry Regiment, who declares that he witnessed the activity of *francs-tireurs* at Staden. The Germans had had to fight exclusively against these during the whole night of the 19th October. On the morning of the 20th October, as they attacked the town, they encountered, about 400 to 500 yards away from the town, a flanking fire, which came from a house standing by itself. When the house was taken four *francs-tireurs* came out of it (App. 49).

Here, again, the civilian population was held responsible for the resistance of the Belgian and French forces.

On the 19th October the 1st Belgian Cavalry Division was, in conjunction with French cavalry, operating near Staden. A cyclist company of the Division with a motor machine-gun was moving from 8 to 10.45 a.m. between Staden and

* See also the Note of Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur (Appendix, Document IX., p. 332).

Cortemarck ; it then retired on the hamlet of Hazewind, half way to Staden, where it opened fire about 1 p.m. on some German skirmishers, who were also under the fire of a battery. Moreover, on the 19th October Staden was occupied by two French infantry battalions. At midday on the 20th October the Belgian General Headquarters was informed that Staden had had to be evacuated by the French troops after night fighting.

As to the assertion that *francs-tireurs* were found in an isolated house, that is no less open to suspicion than the assertion which attributes the defence of Staden to *francs-tireurs*. Biernirth, who no doubt saw four peaceful inhabitants dragged from a house, gratuitously calls them *francs-tireurs*. He does not even say that these people were armed, or that arms or ammunition were found in the house.

The incident to which he refers is apparently one of many occurrences which happened during the fighting before Staden. Here are two accounts of incidents of the same kind which have reached the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

I. STATEMENT OF ABBÉ MOSTAERT, BELGIAN CHAPLAIN AT LISIEUX.

M. Foulon, with other inhabitants of Staden, hid in the cellar of his house, which is near the church. German soldiers knocked at the garden door. M. Foulon went out and opened it. He was asked whether there were any French soldiers inside. When he replied in the negative, he was killed by rifle fire without trial. Then the others were made to leave the cellar to be shot by the church. Fortunately an officer intervened to prevent those murders.

II. DEPOSITION OF VALÈRE ROMMENS, AGED 18, RESIDING AT GITS.

On Monday, the 19th October, the Germans entered Gits during the morning, following upon vigorous resistance from French Dragoons and Cuirassiers. They set on fire three houses and a farm near a wood called Leembosch, and killed by bayonet thrusts the farmer, Victor Wijdogghe, upon whom French troops had been billeted.

Two houses were burnt in the centre of the village. One of them was intentionally set on fire after being drenched with petrol. It belonged to Charles Maes.

Farmer De Leu was assassinated at his farm at the place called "Gitsberg," on the pretext that civilians had been firing. All the men in the hamlet, about 68 in number, were collected and taken to Staden in front of the troops, thus forming a shield against the French troops firing from Staden. On arriving at Staden the Germans were attacked by the French. Taking advantage of the confusion into which the Germans fell, the civilians ran away. Seven of them (Roelens, Michel ; Devos, Clement ; De Beuse, Félix ; Van der Vyvere, Vital ; Haerens, son of Alphonse Haerens ; Werbrouck, Victor ; and de Jonckheere, Odile), took refuge in a cellar, but were taken out by the German soldiers, who shot them in front of the house opposite.

I have been told that 28 civilians were murdered at Staden.

It is certain that no inhabitant of Gits fired a shot. An officer, who came four or five days later to make an inquiry at Gits, and in particular went to De Leu's farm, acknowledged it in presence of De Leu's wife.

TREMBLEUR (BLÉGNY).

Blégnny, the principal district of the village of Trembleur, was twice ravaged. On the 5th August, M. Smets, a master gunsmith, who was by the bedside of his wife, who had just been delivered, was killed by the German soldiers, while others forced his wife out of bed with their rifle butts and drove her off, and also her sister, who was carrying the infant. At the same time many residents in Blégnny, driven from their houses, which were set alight, took refuge in the Institute of Blégnny, which was kept by nuns. On the 6th, the Germans shut the men up in the church, leaving the women and children in the Institute. Next day they took the men to Battice. The village priest, Abbé Labeye, was shamefully used. They threw him into a ditch, rubbed his face in the mud, struck him and pricked him with their bayonets. Seven men were ill-treated in every way and then shot. One of them was M. François Dumonceau, the sheriff, 78 years of age. Three others were murdered on the 6th and 7th August. On the 16th August fresh executions took place, the Burgomaster, M. Ruwet, the priest, M. Labeye, and MM. Gaspard and Léopold Hackin, were put against the church wall and shot.

On the 15th August two residents of Blégnny, M. Henri Renzonnet and his mother, who was begging for his release, were shot at Barchon in a cowardly manner.

The hamlet of Blégnny was completely rased to the ground and 17 of its inhabitants were murdered.

The "White Book" is silent on these abominable crimes. It only gives, as to Blégnny, the deposition of Colonel von Gottberg (App. 3), who states that on

* See also the letter of the Bishop of Liège to the Governor-General of the occupied parts of Belgium, at p. 347.

the 5th August, just as dusk fell, the baggage column was violently fired at by the inhabitants of Blégny, and that the troops were fired at again from time to time during the night.

One may ask how Colonel von Gottberg was able to satisfy himself in the dark that the shots fired at his men were fired by civilians. It was the more incumbent on him to show caution on this point, since he must have known that Belgian troops were defending the Liège district.

In fact, on the 5th August there was on the Barchon Road at Blégny a post of about 20 men, commanded by Sergeant Limmer, of No. 2 company of the 4th battalion of the 14th Line Regiment, and Sergeant Gilissen, of the Artillery, from Barchon Fort, was taking observations at Blégny all day long.

Neither on the 5th nor on the 16th August did the inhabitants join in the fighting. This is proved by comparing the vague evidence of Colonel von Gottberg with the account of the events at Blégny, set down by the priest, who was murdered, in a note-book from day to day. The account of M. Labeye is as follows :—

"Monday, 3rd August, at 5 o'clock, the tocsin. Premature signal. Tuesday, 4th August, trenches. Arrests. Killed and wounded at Mortiex and Julémont; 4 o'clock, cannonade. At 5 o'clock, German cavalry reported at Trembleur. A platoon of Belgians attacks them. A battery in the fields at Trembleur is firing two or three shots every five minutes, and the Barchon fort is replying. At 6.30 I am asked for at the hospital, where I hear confessions until 8.30. The cannonade stopped at 11 o'clock p.m., to begin again at 3 a.m.

"6th August at 5 o'clock. A German battalion occupies the village. The Belgian troops fire at it and retire on Barchon. Wednesday afternoon. The Germans are searching the houses and sending the people to the church, promising them safety. Then they seize them in the houses and take them to the church to the number of about 250. I go to the church. All was in confusion. About 15 soldiers were guarding the people. I promise to help calm them and to pray. I get into the pulpit and prayers are said. Then I go to the confessional; almost all present themselves. Later I am forbidden to hear confessions or to pray, and they proceed to make investigations in the church. Soon we see the light of fires around. Being taken out to appear before the Major, I find the square in flames. The market and the houses of Delnooz, Dortu, Lechanteur, Greffe, Clermont, Heuchenne, Rikir, Carabin, Smets, Plieys, Duckers, Julin, Dumoulin, Verviers, Westphall, Devortille, Battise, Hackin, Custers, Bartholomé, Gueusay, Comblain, Renard, Grandjean, Bouvier, Dauby, Fransen, Rademacker, Bouwers, and Darchambeau burning.

"Joseph Smets, Lambert Delnooz and Herman Hendrick were killed.

"We passed the night in the church. Ernest Clermont and Léopold Dortu have nervous seizures. About 5 o'clock they come and tell us: the women and children may leave; the men will stay and be taken to Germany. Could I have escaped being included? In any case I made no such request. I was of opinion that I should be useful if I accompanied 170 unfortunates.

"We depart. On the other side of Golcé we are made to enter a meadow. First alarm: we believed we were going to be shot. I begin to pray. After an hour the march begins again. We enter another meadow near Battise. We are posted in the middle, surrounded by sentries. We must lie down; they will stop there. For food, some sweets and crusts. In the evening a little soup, given by sympathetic soldiers.

"I was the butt of much unpleasantness from the men and subordinate officers. They accused me of having put the telephone in the tower (placed there by the Belgian army), and of having put soldiers there to fire at the Germans. Then insults to religion followed—jeers at Jesus Christ and prayer. They wished me to admit that I could speak German. As I did not understand them, they shook their fists at me, kicked me, threatened me with rifles and bayonets, with an axe and with a dagger. . . . Once an officer spat in my face and threw my biretta on the ground and spat on it. Another hit me a violent blow in the chest and kicked me on the leg. A soldier pricked me thrice with his bayonet and made a slight wound. Others, in order to give apples to my companions, threw them at my head. Nothing very serious, but they appeared to be so furious that I believe they would have killed me had I been alone.

"In the meantime they had just shot near us five of our companions: Joseph Cursters, Jean Dortu, Sodar, Joseph Flamand and Renard. Twice also they gave us to understand that we too were about to be shot. At another time we are placed under the fire of a volley designed to frighten us. Then they place in front of us a second set of four men sentenced to death; one was Noel Nihan. These poor creatures had been there with their hands bound from the evening until 4 a.m., and I know that they were there the day after we left. What has become of them?

"On Friday, the 7th August, it began to rain heavily about 11.30 a.m. How should we spend the following night? Then a captain came and told us that we were free and must return to Blégny as quickly as possible.

" . . . Monday, August 10th. At this date there were 38 houses burned down and 23 damaged.

" . . . Thursday, 13th. Several houses plundered and two young men taken away. The Burgomaster obtains some flour from Argenteau mill.

"Friday, 14th. Several houses plundered.

"Night between Friday and Saturday. They burn the village of Barchon. The priest is taken away a prisoner."

The communes or hamlets mentioned in the "White Book" form only a small minority compared with the numerous places as to which the Imperial Government attempts no kind of justification.

The list of places where burning and destruction occurred is too long to give. For the following Provinces alone the figures are:—Province of Liège, 107 communes; of Namur, 141; of Antwerp, 51; of Brabant, 118, without counting any of the many communes where houses were looted but not destroyed.* In the Province of Liège, 3,444 houses were destroyed; of Namur, 5,243; of Antwerp, 3,553; of Brabant, 5,833. The estimate of the number of houses burnt in the province of (Belgian) Luxemburg is over 3,000. In Brabant alone over 15,000 houses were looted, but this last number, which is given as an indication only, is not guaranteed to be exact.

The list given below, *which is incomplete*, is of places where civilians were murdered.† The number of victims for each commune is, as a rule, that of inhabitants whose identity has been established. It is often less than the actual number.

PROVINCE OF ANTWERP.

Exact information as to the murders committed by the German forces in this province is still lacking.

PROVINCE OF BRABANT.‡

Commune.	Killed.	Commune.	Killed.
*Aerschot	†150	Hofstade	6
Attenrode-Wever	6	Holsbeek	1
Autre-Eglise	3	*Hougaerde	4
Bael	1	Humbeek	5
Baisy-Thy	1	Jodoigne-Souveraine	1
Beauvechain	2	*Kessel-Loo	59
Bierbeek	2	Langdorp	3
Boortmeerbeek	5	Limelette	1
Brusseghem	2	Linden	6
Budingen	2	Linsmeau	18
*Bueken	8	Londerzeel	1
Bunsbeek	4	*Louvain	†100§
Cagevine-Assent	3	Lubbeek	15
Campenhout	14	Machelen	2
Cappelle-en-Bois	4	Meensel-Kies	2
Céroux-Mousty	2	Mélin	3
Corbeek-Loo	20	Melsbroeck	6
Cortenbergh	1	Merchtem	5
Cortryck-Dutzel	7	Messelbroeck	2
Diest	2	Meyse	2
Dormael	3	Molenbeek-Wers	1
Elewijt	10	Molenstede	11
Eppeghem	8	Montaigu	1
Erps-Querbs	1	Muysen	6
Geet-Betz	1	Neder-over-Heembeek	1
Gelrode	18	Neerheyliessen	2
Genappe	1	*Neerlinter	1
Glabbeek	3	Neeryssche	1
Graesen	1	Niewvenrode	3
Grunberghen (and Pont Brulé, Oyenbrug)	5	Niew-Rhode	1
Haecht	7	Oplinter	2
Haekendover	1	Opwijk	1
Heelenbosch	7	Orsmael-Gussenhoven	4
*Hérent	22	Ottignies	2
Hever	2	Overysse	1
Héverlé	6	Pellenberg	1
Hoeleden	1		

* See the Second Volume of Reports of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry, pp. 146 *et seq.*

† The places marked with an asterisk are mentioned in the "White Book."

‡ See the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 21st Reports of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry. The "White Book" also mentions Capellen. No civilian was killed in that village.

§ See Part II., Chapter V., Section III., Document 31, for the list of victims at Louvain, Corbeek-Loo, Kessel-Loo, Hérent and Héverlé. This list contains 210 names. Seven bodies have been identified (p. 283).

Commune.	Killed.	Commune.	Killed.
Perck	5	Tirlemont	3
Ramsdonck	1	Tourinnes-les-Ourdons	1
Rhode-Saint-Pierre	2	Tremeloo	3
Rillaer	7	Velthem-Beysem	14
Roosbeek-Neerbutzel	3	Vertrijck	1
*Rotselaer	38	Vilvorde	6
*Schaffen†	22	Weert-Saint-Georges	3
Schepdael	1	Werchter	15
Sempst	18	Wesemael	13
Sichem	5	Wespelaer	21
Steenhuffel	1	Wilsele	7
Steenockerzeel	1	Winghe-Saint-Georges	1
Tervueren	3	Winxele	5
Thielt-Notre-Dame	1	Wolverthem	5
Thildonck	10	Wanmersom	2
Thines	1	Zetrud-Lumay	3

PROVINCES OF WEST FLANDERS AND EAST FLANDERS.‡

Civilians were killed at Alost, Termonde§, St. Gilles, Lebbeke, Appels, *Essen, Quaetrecht, Melle, Renaix, *Staden, *Roulers and apparently at other places near the front.

* The places marked with an asterisk are mentioned in the "White Book."

† The village of Schaffen was destroyed on the 18th August. Women and children were among the victims. (See the 1st Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.) A sick old man and his granddaughter were burnt alive in their home. A girl of 20 was ripped open and thrown into a well. The priest was attacked and left for dead. Here is the deposition that he made at Antwerp on the 9th September, 1914, before the Belgian Commission of Inquiry:—

"The Germans arrived like a swarm of bees at Schaffen about 9 o'clock on Tuesday, the 18th. They set fire to 170 houses. A thousand people are homeless. The Town Hall and the priest's house are among the houses burnt down. At least 22 people were killed for no reason whatever. Two men (named Macken and Loods) were buried alive, head downwards, in presence of their wives. The Germans caught me in my garden and tied my hands behind me. They ill-used me abominably. They made a gallows for me, saying that they were going to hang me; another took me by the head, the nose and the ears, making pretence to cut them off. They made me look at the sun for a long time. They broke the arms of the smith, who was a prisoner with me, and then killed him. At one time they made me enter the burgomaster's house, which was on fire, and then took me out. This lasted the whole day. Towards evening they made me look at the church, saying that was the last time I should see it.

"About 6.45 they released me, striking me with whips. I was covered with blood and I lay unconscious. At this moment an officer made me get up and ordered me to go. A few yards off they fired at me. I fell and lay as if dead. That was my salvation.

"They pretended that there had been firing from the tower, which was false, for the door of the church was fastened, and they broke it open but found no one inside.

"Before they released me, they took the Belgian flag and tore it to pieces.

"All the houses were first drenched with paraffin and petrol, which they brought with them."

‡ The "White Book" also mentions the communes of Deynze and Westroosebeke. The Commission of Inquiry has no knowledge whether civilians were killed in those places.

§ See, as to the sack of Termonde and Lebbeke, the 9th Report of the Commission of Inquiry.

The town of Termonde was almost completely destroyed. The communes of Saint Gilles and Lebbeke, which form, with the town of Termonde, a place of 26,000 inhabitants, were sacked and looted. Twenty-five inhabitants were assassinated. Except four, all were tortured and killed or finished off with bayonets, picks or axes. The majority were so disfigured that they could only be identified by objects found on them.

Many women and girls were raped. Two sisters, aged 15 and 17, had to spend the night in chemises by a ditch near their home. They were horse-whipped and threatened by a German whose advances they refused, and he set a bulldog at them. A woman whose husband was killed in the morning, after being forced to march ahead of the German forces, was ravished before her children's eyes. When the poor woman fled from these scoundrels, they took the opportunity of emptying her grocery shop and breaking her poor furniture. Women of 60 and 70 had to defend themselves from the brutality of the soldiers.

PROVINCE OF HAINAUT.†

Commune.	Killed.	Commune.	Killed.
*Acoz ...	3	Jurbise ...	7
*Aiseau ...	3	Lodelinsait ...	24
Boignée ...	1	Marchienne-au-Pont ...	24
Bouffloux ...	10	*Monceau-sur-Sambre ...	70
*Charleroi ...	†40	Montigny-le-Tilleul ...	2
Couillet ...	18	Nimy ...	17
Farciennes ...	23	Péronnes ...	8
Gilly ...	6	Pironchamps ...	4
Goutroux ...	2	Quaregnon and Jemappes ...	†70
*Gougnies ...	3	Rives ...	4
Jumet ...	10	Roselies ...	2

PROVINCE OF LIÈGE.‡

Commune.	Killed.	Commune.	Killed.
Barchon ...	32	*Louveigne ...	29
*Battice ...	36	Magnée ...	21
Berneau ...	7	Melen (La Bouxhe) ...	129
Cerexhe ...	4	Micheroux ...	9
Cornesse ...	1	Mouland ...	4
*Esneux ...	7	Olne ...	62
Evegnée ...	2	Pontisse ...	23
Fexhe-Slins ...	3	*Poulseur ...	7
Flémalle-Grande ...	1	Queue-du-Bois ...	11
Fléron ...	15	*Retinne ...	41
Forêt ...	13	Romsée ...	31
Fourin-Saint-Martin ...	5	Saint-André ...	4
*Francorchamps and its hamlet Hockai ...	13	Saive ...	2
Haccourt ...	18	Seilles ...	†50
Hermée ...	11	Soiron ...	4
*Herve ...	44	Soumagne ...	165
Heure-le-Romain ...	27	Sprimont ...	48
Huy ...	1	*Trembleur (Blégny) ...	17
Jupille ...	8	Visé ...	†30
Julémont ...	12	Vivegnis ...	6
Liège ...	29	Wandre ...	32
		*Warsage ...	18

PROVINCE OF LIMBURG.§

The information in the possession of the Commission of Inquiry is not detailed enough even for an approximate list.

Civilians were assassinated at Bilsen, Canne, Lanaeken, Lummen, Heers and Tongres, among other places.

* The places marked with an asterisk are mentioned in the "White Book."

† See the 22nd Report of the Commission of Inquiry. The "White Book" also contains depositions relating to occurrences at Anderlues, Fleurus, Gerpennes, La Vigne, Peissant and Lessines. No murder or damage was done at Lessines (see p. 94). The Commission of Inquiry has no information as to the killing of civilians at Fleurus, Gerpennes, La Vigne or Peissant. At Anderlues, according to Captain von Gottberg, a civilian and a *French soldier* were shot for having killed or wounded three Germans by firing at them from a house (App. 3). The French soldier, although in uniform—at least the "White Book" does not state that he was in civilian clothes—was shot as a *franc-tireur*. There is no comment on this proceeding in the "White Book."

‡ See the 17th Report of the Commission of Inquiry and also the book (*Vers Liège. Le Chemin du Crime, Août, 1914*, by Gustave Somville. Paris, Perrin et Cie., 35, Quai des Grands-Augustins.

The "White Book" mentions, besides the places marked with an asterisk, the Commune of Chénée. The Commission of Inquiry has no knowledge of any civilians being killed there.

§ See the 17th Report of the Commission of Inquiry.

PROVINCE OF (BELGIAN) LUXEMBURG.†

Commune.	Killed.	Commune.	Killed.
Barenzy	3	*Morhet (Rosière)	6
Bleidy	5	Musson	9
Etalle ‡	12	Mussy-la-Ville	14
Ethe	197	Neufchâteau	26
*Florenville	1	*Rossignol	105
Gomeny	3	*Rulles	1
Herbeumont	6	*Sainte-Marie§	5
*Houdemont	11	Signeulx	1
*Jamoigne	2	*Termes (Frénois)	1
Latour	71	Tintigny and its ward Ansart	90
*Léglise	2	Villers-devant-Orval	2
*Mellier (Thibessart)	3		

PROVINCE OF NAMUR.||

Commune.	Killed.	Commune.	Killed.
Achène-Taviet	1	Lesve	5
*Andenne	†250	Louette-Saint-Pierre	10
*Anthée	19	Mettet	3
Auvelais	†55	Namur	†75
*Biesme	8	Omezée	2
Bonnine	3	Onhayé	8
*Couvin	3	Romedenne	4
*Dinant	606	Salzinne	†6
Dourbes	3	*Sorinne	2
Ermeton-sur-Biert	6	Sosoye-Maredret	1
Floreffe	3	Spontin	45
Franc-Waret	23	Surice	†25
Graux-Bossière	1	Tamines¶	336
Hastiére par-delà	18	Vitrival	1
Hastiére-Lavaux (Maresnes)	1	Waulsort	†15
Hermeton-sur-Meuse	2	Willersée	2
*Le Roux	3		

* The places marked with an asterisk are mentioned in the "White Book."

† See the 8th Report of the Commission of Inquiry.

The "White Book" also mentions Anlier (Behême), Attert (Nothomb), Bovigny, Chiny, Corbion, Gouvy (see *supra*, p. 89), Les Bulles, Marche, Porcheresse, Saint-Vincent and Waha (Holbogne). The Commission of Inquiry has no grounds for asserting that civilians were killed there. The "White Book" alludes to the execution of a civilian at Saint-Vincent, and the Bishop of Namur, in his refutation of the charges in the "White Book," states that several civilians were killed at Les Bulles. Mgr. Heylen denies that any execution of civilians occurred at Anlier (Behême). (See pp. 332 and 333).

Inhabitants of Anloy, Bertrix, Bellefontaine, Glaireuse, Izel, Maissin, Saint-Léger, Vance and Villance were shot. These are not mentioned here, as the Government does not possess a list of the victims' names.

‡ The curate of Etalle, arrested in his parish, was dragged to the square before the church and hanged on a street lamp.

§ Some German soldiers, noticing an 18-year-old girl, tied her to a stair-rail and raped her in turns. Her father, who tried to rescue her, was shot.

|| See the 11th, 20th and 21st Reports of the Commission of Inquiry.

The Commission of Inquiry can give no precise information as to whether any inhabitants of the communes of Bièvre, Bouvignes, Champion, Conneux, Evelette, Graide, Laneffe, Leignon (Ychippe), Leuze, Rosée, Silenrioux or Somzée, mentioned in the "White Book," were killed. The "White Book" states that civilians were shot at Laneffe and Somzée (App. 34). According to the note of Mgr. Heglen this assertion is incorrect. (See Part III., Document IX., p. 333.) According to the "White Book" two were shot at Rosée.

¶ The list of the names of victims at Tamines is far from complete. Over 400 were killed there, and 276 houses were pillaged and set on fire.

The murders were committed in an atrocious manner. About 7 p.m. on Saturday, the 22nd August, 1914, several hundred men were collected at St. Martin's Square, by the Sambre. The German soldiers stood about 10 to 12 yards away. At a signal a volley rang out. All—killed, wounded, and unhurt—fell down. The cry was raised "Stand up." Those who were uninjured did so and were immediately fired at again. Witnesses state that the second time the Germans used a machine gun.

After the first volley some of the men jumped into the Sambre and tried to escape by swimming. The soldiers fired at and killed some; others escaped.

When the firing ceased a frightful scene, which continued far into the night, occurred—the finishing off of the wounded. If matters had ended with the firing the victims would not have exceeded 200 killed and 200 wounded. But the soldiers, notably many wearing the Red Cross brassard, came up to the victims and began to kill all who shewed signs of life. Lighted by pocket lanterns, they passed along the rows of victims, striking the wounded with rifles and bayonets.

Thus the "White Book" passes over in silence the ravages and murders committed by the German soldiers in a large number of places. For example, it does not mention the almost complete destruction of the towns of Visé* and Termonde,† the frightful hecatombs of Barchon, Melen (La Bouxhe), Olne, Romsée, Soumagne, Sprimont, Wandre,* Tamines, Surice,‡ Spontin, Jemappes and Quaregnon,§ Latour and Ethe;|| the massacres at Fléron, Haccourt, Heure-le-Romain, Liège, Magnée, Pontisse, Saint-André, Neufchâteau,¶ Hastière-par-delà, Namur,** Marchienne-au-Pont, Farcienne, Lodelinsart, Nimy,†† Gelrode, Sempst, Wespelaer, and Werchter; the martyrdom of the inhabitants of Linsmeau,‡‡ Lebbeke §§ and Schaffen;||| or the tortures inflicted on the priest of the last named place.

These crimes are inexcusable. The cause of these acts of barbarity, which have shocked the world, was, besides perhaps the general desire for plunder, the wish to terrorise the people, which forms part of the German theory of war, and the odious system of holding civilians responsible for legitimate acts of war which occurred at their house, or village, or town.

There are few cases of the application of the theory so characteristic as the murders and arsons that followed upon the destruction of the railway lines, about the end of September, 1914, by detachments of the Belgian army. The command of the Belgian army states the circumstances in which these detachments, sallying from the entrenched camp of Antwerp, were directed to cut the German lines of communication, thus :—

"The railway system of the country afforded great facilities to the enemy's commissariat and transport. The Belgian High Command desired to impede these services, and ordered the formation of seven detachments of a hundred cyclist volunteers, who were to destroy the railways in the occupied districts.

"On the 22nd September these detachments left Antwerp, each having as objective a particular district. Most of them succeeded in crossing the German lines, reached their destination and cut the principal railways of Limburg, Brabant and Hainault, thus causing considerable disturbance to the enemy's transport."¶¶

Devastation was caused in particular :—

(i) On the 25th September, 1914, on the railway from Bilsen to Tongres. Military cyclists unbolted the rails. Shortly afterwards a trainload of German soldiers was derailed. The Germans shot eight civilians and set fire to a part of the village of Bilsen.***

(ii) 25th September, on the Brussels-Paris line. The soldiers destroyed the line not far from the farm occupied by the Burgomaster of Montigny-lez-Lens. As a result of this military operation, the Germans burned down the priest's house and the burgomaster's house, after breaking open the safe and stealing all that they could remove. They also set fire to several small farms in the neighbourhood.†††

(iii) 29th September, on the Liège-Brussels line. The railway was cut at the commune of Louvenjoul, between Tirlemont and Louvain. This was effected by a special company of the 6th Belgian Division under the command of Captain Delfosse.

The company was mounted on cycles and carried with it materials for railway demolition. It went from Antwerp to Bourg-Léopold by train, leaving the latter on the 22nd September. On the 23rd and 24th the patrols reported that the Démer,

* See the 17th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry. (Berger-Levrault, Paris, Nancy.)

† See the 9th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

‡ See the 11th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

§ See the 22nd Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

|| See the 8th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

¶ See the 8th and 17th Reports of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

** See the 11th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

†† See the 22nd Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

‡‡ See the 2nd Belgian "Grey Book."

§§ See the 9th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

||| See the 1st Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry, and *supra* note 2 on page 102.

¶¶ *L'action de l'armée belge*. Period 31st July to 31st December, 1914, p. 44. (Paris. Librairie Chapelot.)

*** 15th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

††† 15th Report of the Commission of Inquiry.

between Aerschot and Diest, was impassable. During this period the engineering staff, under Lieutenant Flabas, was engaged in making charges to be placed on the rails so as to be exploded by passing trains. On the 25th, three detachments of three men each were instructed to go to three points on the railway between Tirlemont and Louvain. These detachments, supported by the rest of the company, except a few who were kept on the north of the Démer, marched at night. On the 29th September, one of them, composed of Ptes. Lignon and Verlindin, of the Engineers, and Van Roosbroek, of the 1st Carabineers, reached the wood, one kilometre east of Louvenjoul, and about 100 yards from the railway, about 11 a.m. Until 7 p.m. they watched the line, which was guarded by sentries posted 200 yards apart, where military trains were running every half hour. Taking advantage of the twilight, the men fixed two of their charges and returned to the wood. A few moments later a passing train exploded the charges and caused the derailment of the train and the destruction of the track and telegraph wires. This occurred at the boundary between Louvenjoul and Vertryck.

The noise of the explosion warned the other detachments, who received the order to retire. During their retirement they destroyed by dynamite the local road, about 1,500 yards south-west of Winghe-Saint-Georges.

The demolition of the railway between Louvenjoul and Vertryck was properly carried out by Belgian troops in uniform. No inhabitant had a hand in it.

Yet on the 30th September the German troops burned some houses. On the 5th October Baron von der Goltz had the following incredible notice* posted up at Brussels :—

“During the evening of the 25th September the railway line and telegraph were destroyed on the Louvenjoul-Vertryck section. In consequence these two places were, on the morning of the 30th September, held to account and had to give hostages.

“In future, the places nearest the points where such occurrences take place—*no matter whether they are implicated or not*—will be punished without mercy. With this object, hostages have been taken from all places on the railways threatened with such attacks, and at the first attempt to destroy the railways, or the telegraph or telephone wires, they will be immediately shot.

“Moreover, the troops protecting the railways have been ordered to shoot all suspicious persons found approaching the railways or the telegraph or telephone wires.”

* The date of 25th September given in this notice is incorrect. As has been seen, the line was cut on the 29th. This mistake in the Brussels notice does not occur in the notice posted at Louvain, where the date is correctly stated.

CHAPTER II.

THE SACK AND MASSACRE AT AERSCHOT.

SECTION I.

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

About 5 a.m. on the 19th August, 1914, spirited rear-guard fighting occurred between the German Second Corps and a Brigade of the 3rd Belgian Division, covering the retreat in front of Aerschot.

About 8 a.m. the Belgian forces retired.

Shortly afterwards the German army entered the town. The soldiers spread through several streets, firing at the houses. They killed five or six inhabitants, set several houses on fire, and robbed several shops.

About 10 a.m. the people were collected in the Rillaer road. M. Tielemans, the Burgomaster, accompanied by a German officer, read a proclamation urging them to remain quiet and ordering them, under pain of death, to hand over, before 2 o'clock, all weapons that they had kept back.

According to this proclamation, every shot fired by an inhabitant would result in the execution of the offender and three others.

The people dispersed and the rest of the day passed without incident. The local authorities were occupied in satisfying the requisitions of the German army, and particularly in billeting the officers and men. Colonel Stenger, commanding the 8th Infantry Brigade, and two other officers, took up their quarters at the Burgomaster's house in the Grand' Place.

Towards evening, when Colonel Stenger was on the balcony of his room and M. Tielemans was distributing cigars among the soldiers in the Square, a shot was fired. It was immediately followed by brisk firing. The soldiers in the Square and neighbouring streets fired in all directions. Colonel Stenger was mortally wounded.

M. Tielemans and his family rushed indoors. They took refuge in the cellar. A few moments later a German officer came to find M. Tielemans and his son, 15 years of age.

Meanwhile the soldiers were chasing the inhabitants and plundering and burning the houses.

The German soldiers entered every house in the Grand' Place and the Rue du Persil and the Rue Courte. They made the men, women and children come out, and hustled them brutally towards the Grand' Place. The men were separated from their families. One group of 78 men was taken out of the town, and Rittmeister Karge, a captain of gendarmerie, had them all executed.* They were ranged along the Louvain road in a field bounded by some workmen's dwellings in flames. They were forced to advance in threes, hand in hand, and to pass in front of some gendarmes, who shot them with revolvers. The first three were Abbé Carette, holding M. Paul Verlinden with his left hand and another inhabitant with his right. Of these 78, three escaped by falling down. They were MM. Paul Verlinden, Morren and de Winter.

Another group of victims, about 100 in number, including M. Joseph Tielemans, the Burgomaster, and MM. Emile and Louis Tielemans, his brother and son, were taken to the place of execution, in the same field, but a little farther in the direction of Louvain. They had their hands tied behind their backs so tightly that some were groaning with pain. They had to pass the night on the ground.

About 6 in the morning a group of officers arrived. A few moments later M. Tielemans and his brother and son were shot. The other men were grouped in rows of threes. The Germans made every third man come forward and shot him.

The people of Aerschot were forced to bury the bodies.

The number of victims was over 150 ; 155 had been exhumed by December 18th, 1914. Eight women and several children were among the slain.

Drunkenness, pillage, and arson continued for some days. Furniture and valuables were loaded on military wagons and sent to Germany. Most of the inhabitants—men, women, and children—left in the town were shut up in the

* The number 78 is given by eye-witnesses. Captain Karge, whose deposition is printed in the "White Book" (App. A 3), fixes the number of inhabitants that he executed at 88.

church and remained there several days with hardly any food. On the 28th August they were marched to Louvain and driven through the ruined city, while the German soldiers sent shots after them.

Next day they were brought back to Aerschot; the men were again imprisoned in the church, and the women in M. Fontaine's house. Many inhabitants of neighbouring villages, including about 30 ecclesiastics, priests and monks of Aerschot and the neighbourhood, were brought in during the following days.

On the 6th September 300 of these unfortunate men, mostly put into cattle trucks, were sent to Germany.*

During this time the soldiers outraged many women and girls.

The places round Aerschot were not spared.

At Gelrode (997 inhabitants) 18 people were killed and 99 sent to Germany. Twenty-three houses were burnt and 131 plundered.

At Wesemael (1,988 inhabitants) 13 were killed and 324 sent to Germany. Forty-six houses were burnt and 147 plundered.

At Werchter (2,676 inhabitants) 15 were killed and 32 sent to Germany. Two hundred and sixty-seven houses were burnt and 162 plundered.

At Betecom (2,756 inhabitants) 11 were sent to Germany. Seven houses were burnt and 25 plundered.

At Langdorp (2,990 inhabitants) 3 were killed and 1 sent to Germany. Four houses were burnt and 20 plundered.

At Rillaer (3,833 inhabitants) 7 were killed. Thirty-four houses were burnt and 300 plundered.

At Nieuwrode (1,779 inhabitants) 1 was killed and 27 were sent to Germany. One house was burnt and 200 were plundered.

SECTION II.

EXAMINATION OF THE REPORT OF THE GERMAN MILITARY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY AND ITS APPENDICES.

The truth of the facts does not appear capable of contradiction, and the authors of the Report of the German Military Commission of Inquiry concerning Aerschot do not even attempt to deny them.

They content themselves with an attempt to justify the crimes committed on the night of the 19th August and the following days as necessary in order to repress a general rising, the signal for which was said to have been given by a single shot, followed by three volleys, which was fired from a house on the other side of the Grand' Place, opposite the Burgomaster's, at 8 p.m. on August 19th. One of the shots struck Colonel Stenger (App. A 2 and 3).

This theory is quite different from the first version, according to which the sack of Aerschot was decided on because of the assassination of Colonel Stenger by the Burgomaster's son, or a plot against the German command, fostered by the Burgomaster and his family.†

The Belgian Commission of Inquiry has exposed the improbability of the first version, which is contradicted by the facts themselves. Even were the charge true, it could in no way justify the sack and looting of a whole town, the execution, without trial, of more than 150 inhabitants, and the outrages of all kinds which were committed on the defenceless population.

The theory supported by the "White Book" does not stand examination either. The Dutch lawyer, Professor Struycken, has clearly demonstrated this, in his study‡ of the German "White Book" (see *supra* pp. 70 and 75). The following is the translation of the portion of his book that relates to Aerschot:—

* In the field diary of a cyclist who joined up at Burg on the 15th August, 1914, and was taken on the 10th September by the Belgian troops who re-occupied Aerschot we read: "6th September was a day of rest. We only sent off to Germany 300 Belgians, including 22 priests."

In the third section of this chapter, No. 16, p. 121 will be found the account of the arrest of some of these ecclesiastics, and their journey to and captivity in Germany.

† See in particular as to this version the statement of General von Boehn to Mr. Alexander Powell: "When we had settled down in Aerschot the Burgomaster's son entered the dining room where our officers were, and killed the chief staff officer. We merely used reprisals there. The people were treated in the way they deserved." (*Fighting in Flanders*, by Alexander Powell. See also to the same effect Grondijs, *The Germans in Belgium, Louvain and Aerschot. Notes by a Dutch Eye-witness (Les Allemands en Belgique*, p. 22). (Berger-Levrault, Paris—Nancy; No. 34 of the collection, *Pages d'Histoire*, 1914-1916.)

‡ "Het Duitsche Gedenkboek over den Oorlog in Belgie." (Review *Van Onzen Tijd*, 15th year, 1914-15, No. 46, and pamphlet *De Oorlog in Belgie*, p. 71).

"Aerschot is a small ancient town of about 8,000 inhabitants, lying to the north of Louvain. During the morning of the 19th August, fighting took place in its immediate vicinity between the Belgian and German troops, after which the latter entered the town.* During the day the little place was overcrowded with soldiers—infantry, cavalry, transport, artillery and ammunition columns. The Staff entered at 5 o'clock. Colonel Stenger, the Brigade Commander, with his adjutant, Captain Schwartz, and his orderly officer, Lieutenant Beyersdorff, took up his quarters at the Burgomaster's house in the Grand' Place. Captain Karge, of the Mounted Police, occupied the Burgomaster's brother's house, which was in a narrow street opening on the north or north-west of the Grand' Place. Captain Folz, Quartermaster of the 49th Infantry Regiment, arrived at the same time, and a little later Colonel Jenrich, who took over the command of the Place, and also Captain Schleusener, with his machine gun company.

"Except Colonel Stenger, who was killed, these are the witnesses whose evidence has been recorded in the Memorandum. One looks in vain for the evidence of inhabitants of Aerschot.

"The troops were well received by the people. Immediately he arrived, Colonel Jenrich sent for the Burgomaster and warned him against any violence on the part of the inhabitants, impressing upon him 'dass an ihn die Todesstrafe vollstreckt werden würde, wenn auf die deutschen Truppen ein Ueberfall seitens der Bevölkerung stattfände.'†

"About 8 p.m. shots were suddenly fired near the Grand' Place. These were followed by volleys and then came a brisk sustained firing. The soldiers who crowded the narrow winding streets and the Grand' Place became disorderly. They fired without ceasing. The cavalry and transport troops abandoned their horses and wagons. The horses ran away and the vehicles collided and were entangled. The officers ran out and tried by orders and signals to force the men to cease fire, but with little or no success.‡ The houses on which rifle and machine-gun fire had been directed were attacked and partly burnt. The civilians who had taken to flight were arrested, and many were shot.

"This is a summary of the facts.

"Had civilians been firing? None of the witnesses examined says that he saw it. None of them found a civilian with arms. None of them had heard of anyone else who had. Yet they are sure of it. On what is their opinion based?

"Captain Schwarz and Lieutenant Beyersdorff at first believed, when, in the Burgomaster's house they heard the first shots, that they came from a fight with the enemy, who were reported to be to the north. That did not seem accurate. Soon shots were heard near at hand. Shots were even fired at the Burgomaster's house. By whom? Civilians or soldiers? The two officers state positively: 'Von den eigenen Truppen rührten die Schüsse nicht her.'§ How could they know that? All the other witnesses declare that their soldiers kept on firing, and in particular at the Grand' Place. However positively expressed, the statement of these two officers is in general certainly inaccurate. And how, having regard to the fact that the streets and the Grand' Place were filled with thousands of troops, horses and wagons in confusion, could they ascertain with any certainty, either in their room in the Burgomaster's house or in the street even, that their own men did not shoot either in the side streets or in the Grand' Place?

"Cavalry Captain Karge at first thought some soldier of the transport had been guilty of an imprudence, but altered his opinion. Why? When at the first shot he looked out of the window, he noticed in the distance near the roof of the house at the corner of the

* All that follows is taken entirely from the German Memorandum (Author's note).

† "That the death penalty would certainly be inflicted upon him if any attack were made by the population on the German troops."

‡ "Ich habe auch mit dem Hauptmann Schwarz zusammen nach den ersten Schiessen das Zimmer verlassen, um auf dem Marktplatz unter den Truppen, die durch das Schiessen in Unordnung geraten waren, wieder Ordnung zu schaffen." Beyersdorff.

("I left the room with Captain Schwarz at the first shots in order to re-form the troops in the Grand' Place, who had fallen into disorder owing to the firing.")

"Die Führer und Trainsoldaten hatten ihre Pferde und Wagen inzwischen verlassen und in den Hauseingängen Deckung gegen die Schüsse genommen. Die Wagen waren zum Teil ineinander gefahren, da die unruhig gewordenen Pferde führerlos sich ihren eigenen Weg gesucht hatten." Karge.

("The drivers and the transport troops had in the meantime abandoned their horses and carts and taken shelter from the bullets in the doorways. The carts were in part mixed up together, as the horses, being left without drivers, became restive and went their own way.")

"Nach kurzer Zeit glaubte ich wahrnehmen zu können, dass das Feuer von unseren Truppen erwidert wurde, und zwar von dem Marktplatz her. Bald darauf ertönten Signale und Rufe: 'Nicht mehr feuern.' Das Feuer hörte dann auch eine Zeitlang auf, wurde aber, anscheinend von beiden Seiten, wenn auch nicht so heftig, wieder eröffnet." Karge.

("After a short time I thought that I could see that our troops were replying to the fire, especially from the Grand' Place. Soon orders and cries were heard: 'Cease fire.' For a short time the firing ceased, but it was renewed, though not so violently, apparently on both sides.")

"In der Nähe der Mairie, die zu einem Artillerie Depot verwendet werden sollte, stand ein Hauptmann des Infanterie-Regiments Nr 140, der andauernd das 'Ganze halt' blasen liess. Offenbar wollte dieser Offizier zuerst einmal das Schiessen unserer Leute stoppen." Folz.

("Near the Town Hall, which had been converted into an Artillery dépôt, stood a captain of the 140th Infantry Regiment, who kept on sounding the 'Halt.' This officer obviously wished to begin by stopping the fire of our men.")

§ "The shots did not come from our men."

Grand' Place and the street where he was, 'leichte Rauch-und Staubwolken hochsteigen,'* a phenomenon which was repeated after later volleys. There was no firing from the windows. So he concluded from these little clouds of dust and smoke that they were firing from holes made in the roof. He obviously thought that this deduction was self-evident. When random firing followed the volleys, it *appeared* to him that the shots also came from other houses. He does not give the reasons upon which he based this opinion.

"That is all. No other evidence proving that *civilians* were firing in the Grand' Place and its neighbourhood is given. On the contrary, there are grave reasons for thinking that the soldiers themselves were the guilty parties.

"The rumour had got about—and Captain Schwarz also mentions it—that Belgian troops were attacking the village. This rumour arose among the troops at the north entrance of the village, who fled towards the Grand' Place in disorder, firing their rifles. May not the soldiers in the Place and in the narrow winding streets, hearing shots, but not seeing who was firing, have interpreted this firing as an attack by civilians? This version is rendered quite probable by the evidence of Captain Folz, who describes how it began in these words: 'Es war zwischen 3 und 4 Uhr nachmittags als wir in den Ort einritten.† Vorher war von deutschen Truppen schon die 3. Infanteriedivision in Teilen durchgekommen und das ganze, an sich schon eng und winklig gebaute Städtchen war voll von Proviantkolonnen, Artillerie und Munitionskolonnen. Wir waren etwa drei Stunden in dem Städtchen, als plötzlich eine unsinnige Schiesserei begann. Die Schiesserei kam etwa vom Nordwestausgang des Dorfes her. Gleich darauf kamen die Sanitätskompagnie, ich glaube es war die zweite, sowie Teile der Bagage der 3. Division unter fortwährendem Schiessen auf uns zu und meldete, sie hatten Feuer bekommen; ein belgisches Bataillon sei in Anmarsch.'‡

"A double rumour therefore had caused disquiet among the soldiers; first, that the village was the object of a surprise attack by the Belgians, and, secondly, that civilians were shooting at the soldiers. On all sides the latter began firing at the houses. These were attacked and some set on fire; the inhabitants were driven and dragged out. It is conceivable that during these occurrences in the narrow winding streets of the village there was firing in and across the houses, thus giving rise to the idea that firing came *from* the houses. Captain Folz, who at the beginning speaks only of *soldiers* firing, now says—about an hour later—that he saw or heard shots coming from houses. Captain Schleusener now observes the same thing. Nothing shews that the shots were fired by *civilians* and not by soldiers in the streets and houses. Captain Schleusener's evidence tells us how brutally things were done. Hearing that Belgian troops were approaching, he went with his machine-gun company, which he had rallied with great difficulty, to the outskirts of the town. Captain Folz accompanied him. About three kilometres from the village they had failed to find any trace of the enemy and at once returned. Captain Folz was on foot and so returned after the others. When Captain Schleusener entered the village with his company he heard firing and encountered 'zurückjagende Kavalleriepatrouillen und Fahrzeuge der Bagage der 3. Infanteriedivisionen, die Kehrt zu machen versuchten,' § and who kept on firing. He attempted to stop the firing, thought he had succeeded, and continued to hear shots coming from the houses. He thereupon gave the order 'die Maschinengewehre freizumachen und die linken Häuserfronten unter Feuer zu nehmen.'|| He was told 'dass auch aus einem Hause rechts geschossen worden sei.'¶ What did he do? 'Ich liess die Gewehre herumdrehen um das Feuer zu eröffnen, als mir ein Sanitätsoffizier bedeutete, dass in diesem Hause Verwundete lagen.'** And therefore they did not fire at that house. It is understandable that when Captain Folz entered the village shortly afterwards he also thought that there was firing from houses, and was able to recognise distinctly 'dass es sowohl Gewehre wie Maschinengewehre waren, aus denen gefeuert wurde.'††

"The German losses in all this were, as always, very small indeed. Only one man is mentioned as killed. Colonel Stenger who was found, dead from bullet wounds, on the floor of his room in the Burgomaster's house. He had a wound in his face and another in his chest. The balcony doors were open and marks of bullets were found on the opposite wall. Some windows were broken. It is to be presumed, therefore, that the Colonel was killed by bullets coming from outside.

* "Light clouds of dust and smoke rising."

† This must be a mistake. Captain Folz entered with the other Staff officers and Colonel Jenrich, who all say that it was 5 o'clock. (Author's Note).

‡ "We rode into the place between 3 and 4 p.m. We were preceded by German troops. The 3rd Infantry Division had passed through before us. The whole town, which is built in a peculiarly narrow and winding fashion, was full of supply, artillery, and ammunition columns. We had been about three hours in the town when suddenly senseless firing began. This firing came from near the north-west entrance to the town. Almost immediately afterwards an army medical company—I believe the 2nd—and parts of the transport of the 3rd Division arrived, firing heavily, and reported to us that they had been under fire. A Belgian battalion was advancing."

§ "Cavalry patrols retiring at a gallop and the baggage train of the 3rd Infantry Division attempting to turn."

|| "Get ready the machine guns and open fire on the houses on the left."

¶ "That there had also been firing from a house on the right."

** "I was having the machine guns turned round to open fire on it when a medical officer informed me that wounded soldiers were lying in the house."

†† "That both rifles and machine guns were firing."

"Was this done by civilians or by soldiers firing at random at the houses? Next day an army surgeon examined the body, but neither his evidence nor the report of his post-mortem examination appears among the documents. Captain Folz says, it is true, that he was told by the surgeon that the face wound could not have been caused by an infantry bullet, and he was of opinion that the chest wound must have been caused by an air gun. Would it be safe to conclude, on this statement alone, without the evidence of the surgeon, that the commandant was killed by shots fired by the people of Aerschot?"

"What were the measures taken by the armed troops to suppress the alleged rising of the population? There is no word about the number of civilians killed during the uninterrupted firing at their houses. The method of procedure appears most clearly from the graphic account given by Captain Karge of the Cavalry. As was said above, this officer had suspicions about the red house at the corner of the Grand' Place, whence had come the light clouds of dust and smoke. Taking advantage of a short 'Feuerpause,'* he left his house to report to a colonel, who was in the Grand' Place. At the same time he requested permission to set the house on fire, because, in his opinion, 'die Rädelsführer des ganzen Unternehmens in diesem Hause versammelt waren.'† The colonel *refused*. On this he himself relates, 'nahm ich einige Soldaten die in meiner Nähe waren mit und ging mit ihnen auf das Haus zu, aus dem zuerst geschossen wurde und auf dessen Hausboden ich noch die Anstifter und Führer des Ueberfalls vermutete. Inzwischen fand sich auch noch ein Leutnant des Regiments ein, und ich befahl, indem ich Offizier und Mannschaft meinem Kommando unterstellte, die Türen—das Haus hatte eine Haustür und eine Ladentür—und Fenster des Erdgeschosses, welche fest geschlossen waren, einzuschlagen. Hierauf drang ich selbst in das Haus mit ein, und mit Hilfe eines ziemlich grossen Quantums Terpentinöls, welches sich in einer etwa 20 Liter fassenden Blechkanne vorfand und welches ich zum Teil in der ersten Etage, dann die Treppe hinunter und im Erdgeschoss ausgiessen liess, gelang es, das Haus in kürzester Zeit in Brand zu setzen. Ferner hatte ich den hierbei nicht beteiligten Leuten Befehl gegeben, die Hauseingänge zu besetzen und alle flüchtenden männlichen Personen zu verhaften.'‡

"He does not state how many civilians caught in this way were shot. Captain Karge accounted for at least 88. What inquiry did he hold? What proof had he of their guilt? Let him give his own account of what happened: 'Als ich das brennende Haus verliess, waren auch schon etliche Zivilpersonen, darunter ein junger Pfarrer, aus den Nebenhäusern festgenommen worden. Ich liess diese zum Marktplatz bringen; hier hatte sich inzwischen mein Feldgendarmetrietrupp versammelt. Ich setzte nunmehr die Kolonnen in Marsch zur Stadt hinaus, übernahm das Kommando über sämtliche Gefangene, aus denen ich Frauen, Knaben und Mädchen entliess. Von einem Stabsoffizier' (einem Abteilungskommandeur des Feldartillerieregiments Nr. 17) 'erhielt ich den Befehl zum Erschiessen der Festgenommenen. Dann liess ich durch einen Teil meiner Gendarmerie die Kolonnen in Ordnung bringen und in Bewegung zur Stadt hinaus halten, mit dem anderen Teil liess ich die Gefangenen eskortiren und zur Stadt hinausführen. Hier brannte am Ausgange ein Haus, in dessen Lichtschein ich die Schuldigen, 88 an der Zahl, nach dem ich vorher 3 Krüppel ausgesondert hatte, erschiessen liess.§

"Next day still more were shot. As to this there is only the evidence of Colonel Jenrich, who says as to what concerns himself: 'Inzwischen waren die Häuser von den Truppen durchsucht und eine beträchtliche Anzahl von Einwohnern festgenommen worden, die sich nachweislich an dem Ueberfall auf die Truppen beteiligt hatten. Von der festgenommenen männlichen Bevölkerung wurden am andren Morgen der Bürgermeister, dessen Sohn sowie der Bruder des Bürgermeisters und 'jeder dritte Mann' erschossen.||

* "Cessation of fire."

† "The ringleaders of the enterprise were assembled in that house."

‡ "I took with me some soldiers who were near by, and went with them to the house from which the firing began, and in which I still thought the instigators and ringleaders were to be found. In the meantime I had met a lieutenant of my regiment and assuming the command of the officer and his men I ordered them to break in the doors—the house had two doors, a private door and a shop entrance—and windows of the ground floor, which were well fastened. Then I went into the house myself with them, and with the aid of a fair quantity of turpentine, which I found in a 20 litre tin and which I had poured out on the first floor, the stairs, and the ground floor, I set the house on fire in the shortest possible time. I had also ordered the men who were not engaged on this duty to watch the entrances and to arrest all males who came out to escape."

§ "As I left the burning house some civilians from neighbouring houses, including a young priest, had already been arrested. I had these taken to the Grand' Place. In the meantime my troop of Mounted Police had assembled there. I then set the column on the march out of the town, and took over the control of all the prisoners, of whom I released the women, boys and girls. I received from a Staff officer (commanding a section of the 17th Field Artillery Regiment) the order to shoot the prisoners. I then set some of my men to reduce the columns to order and to direct them towards the exit from the town; with the others I had the prisoners escorted and taken out of the town. At the exit a house was on fire, and by the light of its flames I had the guilty parties to the number of 88 shot, having first released three cripples."

|| "In the meantime the troops searched the houses, and a considerable number of the inhabitants, who were evidently guilty of taking part in the attack on the troops, were arrested. Next morning, of the male inhabitants who had been arrested; the Burgomaster, and his son and brother, and every third man, were shot."

"It follows, from the statement that the Burgomaster was also killed, that the Colonel carried out his threat, although the guilt or complicity of the Burgomaster in the pretended resistance of the population could in no way be established. Why were his son and brother shot? The statements of the witnesses give only a bare indication.

"When Captain Schwarz found Colonel Stenger dead in his room he deemed it necessary to make a search of the house in the presence of the Burgomaster's wife and daughter, the Burgomaster being absent. They also went into the cellar, and found, by the window opening on to the street, an 'auffälliges Gestell,* and that a pane of glass had been broken. The captain came to the conclusion that there had been firing from the cellar. There is no statement what kind of trestle it was, or whether the glass had been broken by a shot fired from outside or inside. It is true that Captain Karge states that in the evening, when he reached the Grand' Place, an infantry soldier posted in a 'Toreingang,† told him that he had a moment before clearly seen a shot fired from the house opposite, and at the same time the man had pointed to the Burgomaster's house. Even assuming that the observation was accurate, that it was accurately stated and understood, yet it by no means follows that there was firing from the cellar of the house. It is indeed quite improbable that a soldier posted on the other side of the Grand' Place, when it was full of soldiers and carts, could have seen a shot fired from the cellar.

"However that may be, while searching the house the captain found the Burgomaster's son, a boy of 15, in one of the rooms and handed him to the guard in the Grand' Place. Next day he was shot at the same time as his father and uncle.

"There is beyond all question a serious lacuna in the depositions of the witnesses as to the firing. It is clear that the German Military Commission of Inquiry‡ realised this, and for that reason more or less 'arranged the facts' in its general report. It justifies the execution of the Burgomaster and his brother and son in the following way: 'That the family of the Burgomaster must be considered, not only as privy to hostilities, but as having taken part therein, is proved by a fact ascertained upon the immediate search of the house. There had been firing into the street from the cellar,§ the key of which, according to the family,|| had been lost, and the door of which had to be forced open. A trestle had been placed by the window to assist the marksman.¶ A soldier had seen beyond all shadow of doubt a shot fired from the house. The Burgomaster's son was the only person who could have done this ;** hidden by his family,†† he was brought out of a dark room.‡‡ As complicity in the murder of the colonel, who, according to the Belgian version, had been received *hospitably*, completely involved the family, the father and son were shot next morning, the 20th August. The Burgomaster's brother met the same fate.§§ It was at his house that, at the Burgomaster's suggestion, Cavalry Captain Karge,||| commanding the Second Troop of Field Police, was billeted. He also had been attacked.'¶¶

"This is the reconstruction of the affair by a Commission at Berlin, which did not see the events nor hear the witnesses give evidence. The Commission surpasses itself in its final conclusion: 'Die Teilnahme der gesamten Familie des Bürgermeisters beweist, wie planmässig die belgischen Behörden bei derartigen leider so häufigen heimtückischen Handlungen gegen die deutschen Truppen mitwirken.'*** There is nothing but a presumption, unsupported by any fact, that the Burgomaster's son took part in the firing. One seeks in vain for any trace of complicity on the part of his father or uncle. Nevertheless, in the opinion of the Commission, the whole family was bound to pay the penalty. And because they had as a whole to pay the penalty, it is admitted that they all took part in the attack, which proves that the Belgian 'Behörden††† planmässig'‡‡‡ take part in such plots!"

* "A curious trestle."

† "Gateway."

‡ Major Bauer and Dr. Wagner, advocate at the Court of Appeal, sign on its behalf. (Author's Note.)

§ No one said so. (Author's Note.)

|| The witness merely said: "zu der der Schlüssel angeblich nicht zu finden war" ("the key to which, it was stated, was not to be found"). It must be borne in mind that the Burgomaster was out of the house. (Author's Note.)

¶ A very free interpretation by the Commission of the words: "ein auffälliges Gestell" ("a curious trestle"). (Author's Note.)

** Commission's own conclusion. No witness said this. (Author's Note.)

†† Commission's own conclusion, coming from none of the witnesses. (Author's Note.)

‡‡ The witness stated: "Beim Absuchen der Wohnzimmer kam mir der Sohn des Bürgermeisters aus einem dunklen Raum entgegen." ("During the search through the living rooms the Burgomaster's son met me as he came out of a dark room.") (Author's Note.)

§§ Is not the Commission nearer the blood vengeance of the ancient Germans than Article 50 of the Hague Convention in this argument? (Author's Note.)

||| He merely says that near him "Schüsse einschlugen" ("bullets lodged"). (Author's Note.)

¶¶ This passage, commencing "As complicity," &c., is quoted in the German original by Professor Struycken.

*** "The participation of the whole family proves how systematically the Belgian authorities took part in treacheries like this, unfortunately so numerous, against the German forces."

††† "Authorities."

‡‡‡ "Systematically."

The judgment of M. Struycken is all the more significant, in view of the fact that the author limited himself to the information given by the German Military Commission of Inquiry.* His work, which is purely objective, is not chargeable with partiality, seeing that it comes from a neutral.

In fact, no blame can be attached to the people of Aerschot.

Though the German Inquiry failed to prove the charge made, the evidence before the Belgian Commission of Inquiry and before the English Commission, under Lord Bryce's chairmanship, enables us to recognise the exact facts. Whether the affair began through panic on the part of the German forces, or through the drunkenness or the crime of a German soldier is a question to which no answer can be given. But it is beyond doubt that the theory of a plot or rising of the inhabitants is quite unfounded, as is also the charge against the family of the Burgomaster of Aerschot.

SECTION III.

BELGIAN DOCUMENTS AND WITNESSES.†

1. DEPOSITION OF MAJOR GILSON.

Major Georges Gilson, of the 9th Line Regiment, who was ordered to cover the retreat of the Belgian troops before Aerschot, states that on Wednesday, August 19th, 1914, during the fighting between 5 a.m. and 8 a.m., when he was protecting the approaches of Aerschot, he saw between the opposing lines four women, each carrying a child, and two little girls passing along the road. The Belgians ceased fire to avoid hitting them. The German machine guns continued to fire. One woman was wounded in the arm. They could not have crossed the German lines and got on the road without permission. Everything seems to shew that they were driven forward by the German troops to hinder the Belgian fire at the moment the German troops began to deliver their assault.

2. DEPOSITION OF MME. CECILE CORENS, WIFE OF LOUIS GUSTAVE MICHIELS, HEAD GUARD AT AERSCHOT STATION.

On Wednesday last, the 19th August, my husband was on duty at Aerschot station. About 7 a.m. he went to the station to see whether he ought to leave, but, as trains were no longer running, he was excused from duty. He returned home, and, as the shots fired by the Germans were frequently striking our house, we took refuge in the cellar. Shortly afterwards a body of about 500 or 600 Germans came; they broke open the door of our house and searched all over it to find weapons. They came into the cellar and took my husband and me out. They forced me, with my seven months child, and my husband to go in front of them for about 200 yards.

At one time we had to stop outside a closed house and could no longer talk to one another. When I wished to say something to my husband the Germans shouted, "Halt's Maul."‡

A leader, probably an officer, ordered me to go with my child behind the house, and then they sent my husband into a field and shot him.

Then they came to me and, holding me and threatening me with a revolver, they forced me to shew them where the lock-keeper lived. I pointed out his house and they sent me home.

When all the German soldiers had gone, I went to where my husband was lying and saw that he had a bayonet wound in the thigh and a bullet in the head. He was already stiff and quite dead. I took his watch, his purse and wedding ring, and returned home.

I stayed there until Thursday morning, when the Germans came back and made me leave the house, which they set on fire.

I fled with my child and two pieces of bread to Lierre, and then went to Antwerp to stay with my brother, Alphonse Corens, of No. 9, Michiels Kaai, who is employed at Antwerp.

M. Janssens, the Police Officer, fled with me from Aerschot to Antwerp, but I don't know where he is living now.

* In the preceding pages Professor Struycken calls the "Militär-Untersuchungsstelle" by the abbreviation "De Commissie" ("The Commission").

† The depositions collected on the subject of Aerschot are extremely numerous. Only some are given, but none which could in any way be regarded as favourable to the German troops have been omitted.

The identity of some of the witnesses, who are in Belgium and exposed to German reprisals, cannot be disclosed.

Many depositions as to the murders and damage at Aerschot are appended to the Report of the Commission appointed by the British Government and presided over by Lord Bryce. It is interesting to compare them with these.

‡ "Hold your jaw."

3. DEPOSITION OF M. ANDRE DAUWEN, AGED 56, SPIRIT MERCHANT AT AERSCHOT.

On the morning of Wednesday, the 19th August, the Germans entered Aerschot. They requisitioned five men in the Rue du Marteau to shew the way, and then shot them five minutes from their house. The German soldiers declared that civilians had been firing at them, which is quite untrue. The Burgomaster had several times warned the inhabitants to abstain from any act of hostility.

During the evening the Germans hacked down the doors of all the houses whose owners had gone, and plundered them.

As I did not leave home I did not see what happened in the Grand' Place. I did not see the Burgomaster arrested.

On Thursday morning the soldiers came to my house. I was taken to a field as a prisoner and stayed there for some hours, and then I spent an hour in a stable. There I found M. Pletinix, a magistrate, who was already imprisoned there. Then I was taken to a field to bury the dead. They were civilians who had been shot by the Germans that morning, including M. Tielemans, the Burgomaster, his brother Émile, his son, 15½ years old, and about a dozen others. After that we were made to dig a large trench, which was to serve for burying others.

At 7 o'clock I was released with four or five other elderly men, but the others were kept until the next morning. They were employed in digging pits to bury civilians who had been shot—more than 150.

After that, every day men were imprisoned in the church, and sometimes kept there for two, or even three, days. I left Aerschot this morning at 6 o'clock with a pass given me by the German Burgomaster of Aerschot.

For two days and two nights a continuous stream of Germans passed through, and since then others have still been passing through every day. I don't know what provoked the Germans, but it is certain that no one in Aerschot fired a shot. I am convinced that the Burgomaster's son did not.

I don't know if the Germans assaulted any women or girls.

As for myself, they stole my horse and cart, my motor cycle, my bicycle, clothes, all spirits, all the wine in my shop and all my goods. They broke open my safe. Half the city is burnt down. There has been no arson since the day before yesterday.

4. DEPOSITION OF X., AGED 46, A CLERK AT AERSCHOT.

I was in the employment of Tielemans Brothers at Aerschot. When the Germans arrived I was at Emile Tielemans' house.

Soldiers came in and threatened us with their weapons. The Burgomaster was with them with his hands raised. The Germans ordered the people to open the doors and shutters of their houses.

I was taken with many others to the Rillaer Road. At this time a great mass of Germans was entering from this side. The officers spat at us and shouted: "Durch den Kopf schiessen." (Shoot them through the head.)

The Burgomaster was brought up to us. He was in charge of soldiers under the command of an officer. From the top of the bank he spoke to the citizens, consulting notes in a notebook. He said that all weapons must be deposited at the Town Hall by 2 o'clock, that those who kept them back would be shot, that the citizens were not to go about in groups, and that, if any one fired a shot, he and three others would be shot. After these announcements we were set free.

As I returned to the town I noticed that all the windows along the route taken by the soldiers were broken, and that upstairs windows had been pierced by bullets.

I remained at home until 6 o'clock, and then risked going out. In the street I began to talk to a German soldier. All at once I heard a shot from the direction of the boulevard, and at the same time many shots came from the yard of the hospital, which was full of Germans. All the soldiers in the street began to shoot. I hid myself in the cellar. The firing lasted quite half an hour. I saw my neighbour, Alphonse van Opstal, who wore a Red Cross brassard, lying dead in front of his door, struck in the face by two bullets.

Next day I took refuge in the hospital, where three of my sisters are nuns. All the night and morning the town was being set on fire. My sisters begged an officer, who was in the hospital, to save my house. He went out and, thanks to his intervention, men were made to get on the roof to stop the fire.

5. DEPOSITION OF X., AGED 22, MEDICAL STUDENT AT LOUVAIN, RESIDING AT AERSCHOT.

Early in the morning of Wednesday, the 19th August, the Germans entered Aerschot. My sister, who was holding my little niece in her arms, was upstairs at a window which was shut. An officer saw and fired a revolver at her. The shot grazed her. The day passed without any other incident.

About 7 p.m. the Germans said that inhabitants had shot at them from the house opposite ours. No one had heard any shot fired, but a townsman, O. Nijs, who was afterwards shot, stated in my presence, and maintained it up to the last, that a revolver shot did come from that house. This shot had wounded a superior German officer. I did see a wounded officer, who shouted and shook his fist at us as he was being carried away. It should be noted that some fugitive Belgian soldiers were still hidden in some of the houses. The house from which the shot came

belonged to M. Achille Wygaerts. Shortly afterwards, when they set his house on fire, he jumped out of the window. In his fall he broke his legs and was taken to the Institut des Picpus, where he may still be.* As this house burned, ours, which was opposite, caught alight and the flames spread.

The men living in the street were arrested, and we were taken, about 40 of us, to a potato field, where we spent the night. In the morning superior officers came and held a consultation in a farm close by, and then announced that every third man would be shot. The Burgomaster, his son and his brother were standing apart. The Burgomaster's brother begged an officer, who was billeted on him, to testify that he had not fired. The officer promised and entered the farm where the consultation was being held, but did not return. Another officer came and said that all three must die. They were shot just before our companions.

I was one of the third men, and should have been the last to be shot, but I declared that I belonged to the Red Cross and shewed my card as a student of the Faculty of Medicine at Louvain. That saved me at the last moment.

6. DEPOSITION OF M. FRANCOIS TEURLINCKX, PRINTER, OF AERSCHOT.

I live in the Grand' Place, opposite the Burgomaster's house.

At 6 p.m. on Wednesday, the 19th August, a fusillade began. There was a German soldier in my shop. I asked him what it meant. "Are they machine-guns?" "Yes—the French," he said, and he wanted to hide in the cellar. I saw that the shots were fired downwards from above the road. Soldiers were also firing upwards. Others were firing in the air. I believed that it was a sham fight.

Three officers were looking on from the Burgomaster's balcony. At first they drew back a little in the opening of the window of the balcony, and then suddenly the window was slammed to. I think that at that moment a superior officer was killed or wounded. Afterwards I asked Mme. Tielemans what happened. She said: "They say that my son shot the officer who was killed at my house, but that is not true. During this sham fight, which was intended to scare the people, the officer was hit by a shot from the street. My son was indoors and had been wounded in the foot. I can say of my own knowledge that there were no civilians in the street when this occurred."

Next morning I saw my own son shot. He was 18. My youngest son was wounded in the street. He is under the care of Dr. X., who believes that the wound was caused by a dum-dum bullet. The Germans had wooden bullets for breaking windows. The cavalry are provided with these.

Everywhere the houses were completely pillaged.

7. DEPOSITION OF M. GASTON NIJS, OF AERSCHOT.

About 7 p.m. on the day the Germans entered Aerschot my brother and I were taken. Our hands were bound behind us with copper wire, fastened so tightly that our wrists were cut and bled. We were taken in the group of the Burgomaster, his son and his brother along the Louvain Road. We had, though bound, to lie on our backs in such a way as to make no movement. Our heads had to touch the ground. About 6 o'clock next morning they decided to begin the executions. We were forced—with other civilians, about 100 all told—to be present at the execution of the Burgomaster and his relatives. When the officer announced that the Burgomaster and his son and his brother were to be executed, M. Claes van Nuffel offered his life for them, saying that he begged for the sake of the town that the Burgomaster and his relatives should be spared. "No," said the officer. "It is the Burgomaster that we want." Then the Burgomaster rose and begged the officer to spare the townsmen, but no entreaty could soften the German officer. The Burgomaster, knowing that he himself could obtain no respite, asked that his son's life should be saved, so that he might comfort his mother. The officer tittered, adding that they wanted the Burgomaster and his son and brother. Then the boy rose, followed by his uncle, and stood between his uncle and father. Six German soldiers took their stand 10 yards from them, and, while the poor fellows were saying a last farewell, the officer made a sign with his sword. The shots rang out and the three bodies fell on top of one another.

The others were then arranged in threes; they counted one, two, three, and the one who was No. 3 had each time to come out and stand behind the bodies. The Germans said that they were going to be shot. All the civilians had their hands tied behind them. My brother and I were together. I was No. 2 and my brother Omer, aged 20, was No. 3. I then asked the officer: "Can I take my brother's place? It doesn't matter to you which one you shoot, but my brother, who has finished his studies, is more useful to his mother, who is a widow, than I am." Once more he remained unmoved. "Let No. 3 fall out." We embraced, and my brother Omer joined the others. They were about 30 in a row. Then a horrible scene occurred. The German soldiers passed slowly along the line, killing three at each discharge, each time an order being given by the officer.

* Detailed information given to the Belgian Commission of Inquiry establishes that M. Wygaerts, a joiner, of Aerschot, was in the house with his wife and child when it was set on fire. From the first floor window he threw the child into the yard. Then he jumped, and broke a leg as he landed. Mme. Wygaerts perished in the flames. M. Wygaerts was arrested by the Germans and made the subject of an investigation, but no case was found against him.

The others, numbers 1 and 2, were made to leave, and we passed in front of the machine guns that had been brought up during the night. As we reached the outskirts of the town some of the men were retaken and led back to the place of execution. They were shot there. I succeeded in escaping with some comrades, including the head-master of the secondary school and M. Frans Teurlinckx.

8. DEPOSITION OF M. GUSTAVE PIERARD, AGED 20, BORN AT MERXPLAS, SERVING AS A VOLUNTEER IN THE 6TH LINE REGIMENT.

I was wounded in the left arm during the engagement which took place* when Aerschot was occupied. The Germans took me prisoner in a small wood, where I had taken refuge. It was then about 8 a.m. They took me to a field just by the town. There were already soldiers there who had been taken prisoner, some were wounded and others not. Others were afterwards brought there. A German surgeon attended to me and bandaged me. There were 28 of us, including five or six civilians. We stayed there until 4.30. Then we heard the sound of firing. We were taken into a little shop, one of the first houses in Aerschot on the left side of the road. About 10 minutes later we were taken on to the road by the Démer. Two German companies were there, and we were driven in front of them and they fired at us. Some prisoners jumped into the Démer and were shot down. Only myself and a private in the 9th were saved out of these prisoners. I fell down by the Démer embankment, and was hit by a shot which went through my overcoat. Seeing that I was alive an officer came up, and, when a soldier wanted to shoot me, he ordered me to be thrown into the Démer. I hung on to the branch of a tree, supporting my feet on some stones at the bottom. I remained in the water, with only my head shewing, until the next morning. I then got out and went into a house through the garden. I put on civilian clothes and joined a party of fugitives.

9. DEPOSITION OF ABBÉ LEEMANS, PROFESSOR AT ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE, AERSCHOT.

On the morning of Wednesday, the 19th August, the Germans arrived at Aerschot. I was at the college with about 200 refugees. A large number of troops passed. In the meantime about 50 soldiers, one of whom carried an axe, and an officer entered the college. They asked if there were Belgian soldiers there. I said no, and they went away. Suddenly I heard the noise of falling glass and doors being broken open. A body of Germans arrived at the college. They ordered us to go out, holding up our hands, broke the windows and proceeded to make a search. Suddenly firing began. The Germans alleged that it was civilians who were firing. I am inclined to believe that Belgian soldiers, who had taken refuge in the houses, had, in fact, fired. I took refuge with the German soldiers in a house. When the firing ceased, I was taken to the hospital. Then a German officer questioned me, threatening to destroy the town if any more shots were fired. I went off in the direction of the firing. I was stopped after a short time and taken by two soldiers to the Rillaer road, where there were already many people from Aerschot. On the way I was ill-treated and insulted.

We remained there about three or four hours. Then the Burgomaster arrived with the Commandant. The Burgomaster ordered all weapons to be given up, saying that everyone could go home and that nothing more would happen. We noticed as we returned that the streets were full of soldiers posted there.

Until about 5 or 6 p.m. everything was comparatively quiet. About 6 p.m. we saw townspeople giving the soldiers drink. Suddenly we noticed a movement, and we were ordered to leave the streets and go indoors. We went to the hospital. We had hardly reached it before brisk firing began. Machine guns were firing in the streets. The Germans alleged that it was because civilians had been firing, and in particular they said that the Burgomaster's son had shot at the Commandant. I was not present at subsequent events nor at the executions. In fact, I remained at the hospital, where there was no one but Germans, the Belgian wounded having been evacuated.

During the 20th, 21st and 22nd, the Germans were burning the town. They took to looting. The soldiers entered the houses, seized food and clothing, and loaded them on motors. On the 23rd some of the inhabitants returned. I went to look at the college, which was not greatly damaged. On the 25th the college was sacked. On the 26th the Germans imprisoned the men in the church. On the 28th they evacuated the Red Cross hospital of the Picpus Fathers, and imprisoned in the church the Picpus Fathers and several priests from the neighbourhood and the Red Cross attendants. I went to the college and noticed that the safe had been broken open, and that the Germans had stolen all the contents except a ciborium. I also noticed in the town that several other safes had been broken open. On the same day the Germans took most of the prisoners from Aerschot to Louvain. On the 29th they left Aerschot.

On the 30th August the Landsturm arrived. Up to then the 42nd Infantry Regiment had occupied the town. The men of the Landsturm alleged that they had been fired on by Belgian civilians. Like the others, the Landsturm took to plundering. The tabernacles of the college chapel and of the Picpus Institute were broken open by them. The prisoners remained in the church until the 5th September. Among them were about 30 ecclesiastics, who were made the object of insults. Latterly the prisoners were properly fed. I have been told that these prisoners were taken to Louvain and thence to an unknown destination. I know that many girls were violated and also women in the presence of their husbands.

According to what I was told, abominable deeds were committed at Rillaer.

* On the morning of the 19th August, 1914.

10. DEPOSITION OF MME. JEANNE ANDRIES, WIFE OF M. VAN DE MEULEBROUCKE,
MERCHANT, OF AERSCHOT.

The Germans stole not only food and clothes, but everything valuable—plate, jewellery, pictures, furniture, deeds, stock-certificates and money. They loaded these on German carts. The looting lasted from the 19th August until the 7th September, the day when the Belgians re-took Aerschot. They broke the furniture and safes. I witnessed this, because I did not leave Aerschot until after the Belgian troops came.

The Germans alleged that civilians had fired on them, but in fact the civilians had been disarmed. The Germans were always drunk, and they quarrelled and shot at one another. I saw the priest of Gelrode brought in to Aerschot with three wounded men on Thursday, the 24th August. The Germans said he was an English spy. They took him to the Town Hall, where they ill-treated him. Next day he was taken to the front of the church, and violently struck with rifle butts. His hands were bleeding. Then he was taken to the Démer Bridge, by the Van Nele's house, and there shot. His body remained there until next day, when it was thrown into the Démer.

The men were shut up in the church and received no food for 30 hours. Then they received some bread and water. On the 28th August the women and children were taken to Louvain (15 kilometres) on foot, through the blazing streets. In the Rue de la Station they were fired at, and after that they were taken to the police station.

Many girls of Aerschot were violated by the German soldiers. At the Picpus Fathers' monastery, where there was a Red Cross Hospital, in which there were 70 sick, the German soldiers indulged in orgies. They took 650 bottles of wine there. A great part of Aerschot is destroyed. Everything has been sacked and plundered.

11. STATEMENT OF MME. TIELEMANS, WIDOW OF THE BURGOMASTER OF AERSCHOT.

Here are the facts, as I saw them, after the Germans had taken Aerschot. About 8 a.m. on the 19th August I was not able to go to church with my children, as bullets were dropping into the streets. We went into a room looking on to the Grand' Place. About 9 o'clock some Belgian soldiers, with blood on their faces and helping one another along, came from one of the streets. I opened the window and asked what was happening. "We are retreating. The Germans are pursuing us." A few minutes afterwards the Grand' Place was full of German troops. Seeing this, my son pulled down the blind. A shot was at once fired through the window. The bullet ricocheted and wounded my son in the foot.

About 10 o'clock the German commandant sent for my husband to the Town Hall. When he arrived he was called a *Schweinhund*, and, with extreme brutality, he was ordered to haul down the national flag. He had then to translate into German the notices that he had published in the town, ordering the people to give up their weapons and to remain quiet.

In the meantime three officers called on me and asked to be put up. They were a general* and his two aides-de-camp. They were taken to their rooms, which looked on to the Grand' Place. They could watch the troops stationed there from their windows. Shortly afterwards they went out. The housemaid called me to shew the condition in which they had left the rooms. The lowest burglar could not have upset the furniture in the way the Germans did. Not a drawer had been left unexamined or a paper intact. I got an explanation of this conduct later on. The General asked me the name of the Belgian colonel who was there the night before, insisting on knowing the branch of the service to which he belonged, &c. I replied: "I no more know his name than I do yours. I don't know whence he came or whither he went, any more than I know where you are going."

The German army kept on passing. The men were halted. About 4 o'clock my husband returned. He said to me: "Up to now all has gone well, but I am anxious." He took some cigars to give to the sentries posted at the house. The position of the street door in the garden enabled us to see the General on the balcony. I said to my husband that what he was doing might displease the authorities. As I went away I glanced at the Grand' Place, and I saw very distinctly two pillars of smoke, followed by a multitude of shots. My courtyard was at once filled with horses and soldiers, who were firing in the air like madmen. My husband, children, servants and myself had only just time to rush into a cellar, hustled by the soldiers who took refuge in our house, still firing their rifles. After a few moments of indescribable anguish, one of the aides-de-camp came downstairs, calling out: "The General is dead. I want the Burgomaster." The General was hit by a German bullet while he was on the balcony. My husband said to me: "This is a serious matter for me." I clasped his hand and said, "Courage." The captain handed my husband over to the soldiers, who hustled him and took him away. I threw myself in front of the captain, saying: "Sir, you can prove that my husband did not fire, nor my son either, for they were both here and unarmed."

"No matter, madam, he is responsible."

My son made us change our cellar. About half an hour after he said: "Mamma, I hear them seeking for us. Let us go up and meet our fate bravely." It was the same captain. "Madam, I want your son." He took my son, 15 years old! As my poor child walked with

* It was, in fact, Colonel Stenger, commanding the 8th Infantry Brigade. (Note by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.)

difficulty, because of his wound, he followed, kicking him. I shut my eyes so as not to look. I felt I was dying of grief. It was atrocious. I believe that he had my son taken to his father at the Town Hall.

The rage of the captain was not yet assuaged. He came back and insisted upon my accompanying him from cellar to attic, alleging that there had been firing at the soldiers. He was able to satisfy himself that the rooms were empty and the windows shut. During this inspection he threatened me with his revolver. My daughter placed herself between him and me. This procedure did not make him understand his cowardice. When we reached the hall I said to him : "What is going to become of us ?" He replied coldly : "You will be shot with your daughter and servants." During this the soldiers were bending their bayonets and shewing the terrified servants that they pricked well. When the captain left us a soldier came to me and said : "Go into the Grand' Place. They will do nothing to the women." I turned to get a hat and cloak, but all was stolen already. We left our home without anything. When we reached the Square we found all the neighbours in tears. By my side was a young girl dazed with grief. Her father and two brothers had been shot, and she had been dragged from the bedside of her dying mother. She found her dead nine hours after.

We were an hour in the square, surrounded by a cordon of soldiers. All the houses on the right side of the square were in flames. We could notice the perfect order and method with which these bandits set about their task. There was none of the greediness of men left to their own devices. I can state that they worked in order and under orders. While the houses were burning we could see the soldiers enter the other houses. Using electric torches, they searched the houses, opened the windows and threw out the mattresses and bed clothes, which were given to the poor. From time to time soldiers spoke to us, saying, "You are going to be shot. You are going to be shot." In the meantime soldiers came out of our house with their arms full of bottles of wine. The windows of our rooms were opened and everything in them was thrown out. I turned away so as not to see this pillage. In the light of the burning houses my eyes fell on my husband, my son and my brother-in-law, with other gentlemen, whom they were taking to the place of execution. Never shall I forget the sight nor the look of my husband casting a last glance at his home and wondering what had become of his wife and daughter. And that I might not make him lose courage, I refrained from calling out to him, "Here I am."

About 2 o'clock they said to us : "The women can go home." As my house was still full of soldiers I accepted the hospitality of a neighbour. We had hardly got inside before the Germans came and said that we must leave the town at once. It was going to be bombarded. We had to leave by way of Rillaer. With about 30 women and children we had to walk along a road, upon which were lying the bodies of poor Belgian soldiers, and civilians and horses, in the midst of burning houses. On the way we met hundreds of motors filled with German officers, whose bravery consisted in pointing revolvers at women who had nothing in their pockets with which to buy bread. At last, after an hour's walk, we were able to find a farm which was still standing. We had hardly reached it before a German patrol forced us to remain in a field, forbidding us to enter the farm. Not until late in the evening did we get permission to enter, but we were forbidden to leave. We were obliged to stay there until 8 o'clock. During this time the Germans were capturing men, watching the farewells of husbands and wives, then making their victims advance, only to release them 300 yards farther on. Before leaving they asked if the wife of the Burgomaster of Aerschot was there. They were told no, and in the meantime my pass was destroyed. After their departure I reached the next village, where my friends concealed me at the risk of their lives, and were able to get me to Holland.

I have learned that they were searching for me for weeks, and even offered 10,000 francs reward to anyone who would tell them where I was. I never have learned why the Germans desired to capture me.

It was 11 o'clock in the evening when my husband and his companions left the Town Hall. They took them out of the town. A political opponent of my husband, M. Claes van Nuffel, asked the officer in charge of the execution to spare the Burgomaster's life, saying that he did not belong to my husband's political party, but that my husband was necessary to Aerschot, and offering his own life for him. The German officer was unmoved. My husband thanked M. Claes, saying that he died in peace, that he had passed his life endeavouring to do all the good he could, that he did not ask for life, but he asked that his son, 15 years of age, should be spared to comfort his mother. He was not answered. My brother-in-law asked that his brother and nephew might be spared. He was not listened to. About 5 o'clock on the 20th August they were made to kneel, and a moment later the best people in the world had ceased to live.

12. DEPOSITION OF X., OF INDEPENDENT MEANS.

On Wednesday, the 4th September, Bluts, the Countess Jeanne de Mérode's chauffeur at Westerloo, was requisitioned by the German troops to take a wounded German to Aerschot.

When he reached Aerschot he was taken to the church. The Germans allowed him to go inside. He there saw about 250 men of all ages who had been prisoners for about a fortnight. Among them were 20 or 25 ecclesiastics, including several parish priests of places near Aerschot. They had only the church stairs to rest on and had no blankets. One of the prisoners had become insane, and others were sick. None of them could go out, and the air in the church was terrible. They received for their food nothing but bread and water. After some days, however, the Germans authorised the women to bring food to their relatives.

13. STATEMENT OF M^{LE}. ELMIRE JANSSENS, OF AERSCHOT.

I used to live at Aerschot. On the 19th August, about 7 a.m., a German patrol came by, and I wondered what would happen. Not thinking that there was any need to be afraid of the German troops, I let my shop remain open.

About 11 o'clock the troops arrived. They halted. Some soldiers came to the shop window and smashed it before I had time to realise what was happening. The shop window was looted in a second. Then the soldiers came into the shop and ransacked it. I was unable to save anything. The soldiers were quarrelling about the bottles of cognac and rum when an officer entered. He did not seem to be at all astonished, and merely claimed three bottles of cognac and three of wine. He handed me a warrant. The officers, non-commissioned officers and men went into the cellar and stripped it bare. At this moment I called one of the servants of the Burgomaster's aunt, who lived opposite, and we went to the cellar. There was nothing left.

In the afternoon the Germans came and searched the house on the pretext that there might be arms there. M. Omer Nijs went over the house with some soldiers. A German Red Cross man was sitting on the ground floor. Suddenly we heard the sound of firing. The German cried: "That will be terrible for Aerschot." It was about 6 in the evening. In the street a special trumpet was sounding, which was only heard during the firing. The German soldiers ran into the street. I took refuge in my garden. I saw the house next to M. van Hasendonck's in flames. I called to the members of my family for help, and M. Omer Nijs rescued the inhabitants by means of a ladder. Hardly had this been done when the whole of the upper part of my house was in flames. There were about a dozen persons inside, and the Germans had shut the street door to prevent them from escaping. They tried in vain to get on to the roofs of the houses next to mine. The situation being critical, the door was burst open, and M. Nijs went to ring at M. Emile Tielemans', two doors off, to ask for shelter. There could be no idea of remaining in the street, as the Germans were firing at everyone there. Hardly had they shut the door before there came a violent ring at the bell. They went to look, and three German soldiers ordered everyone in the house to come outside. They took the men away. In spite of my entreaties my father, who was 74 years old and ill, was taken off. The men were sent to the Louvain road. It was at the time they were separated from the women that M. Tielemans, M. Omer Nijs, aged 20, and M. Gaston Nijs, aged 17, had their hands bound behind them with copper wire. The women were taken to the Grand' Place. All lights had been extinguished, but the burning houses afforded light. It was then about 9 o'clock. When the women had been at the Grand' Place for about a quarter of an hour they brought my father back to the women, saying: "Old Father Janssens cannot follow." The women remained there until 4 o'clock. The burning went on. Four houses were set on fire by the Germans during the night in sight of the poor women. Many soldiers kept on passing through the square. As they went by, the old men, women and children had to hold up their hands. At 5 o'clock we were sent to occupy the houses which had not been burnt. It was not for long; officers soon ordered the town to be cleared, as it was to be bombarded. At the same time the men were forbidden to leave. To save my father I cut off his moustache and dressed him in women's clothes. He walked doubled up, as if by age, in order to hide his face. We tried to take the Diest road, but, as it was covered with motors filled with officers, we decided to return to the hospital. We stayed there three days. After that we went to Mme. Nijs' house, as the Germans threatened to take all unoccupied houses. That was not enough, for the Germans then said that there must be children in the house or they would expel the inmates. I went to find my sister with her five children, from 13 to 5 years of age. They had begun to get coffee ready for the refugees when the Germans rang at the door. Mme. Nijs, a widow, went to open it, accompanied by one of her children. The Germans ordered her to leave the house. Mme. Nijs said that she had five young children. The Germans paid no heed to her. An officer, who happened to be passing, asked what was the matter. After some explanation he ordered the house to be left alone. A few minutes after a fresh ring came, and this time three soldiers took the three women and five children to the church, which was nearly full. They all had to stay there for three days and three nights, with no accommodation for the night. For food they were given a little black bread and some water. Without their officers' knowledge, the soldiers brought some dates for the little children. The door of the church remained open. During the second night many shots were fired into the church from the street. The bullets went over the heads of the people and knocked fragments off the walls where they struck. The consternation and despair of the mothers with children were indescribable.

On the 28th August a German officer came and ordered the prisoners to group themselves in fives, keeping families together as much as possible. When this had been done, the column, under armed escort, set out for Louvain under the guidance of officers. The mothers carried their children. One (Mme. Romain) had eight, most of whom were very small. Women who were enceinte, like Mme. Antoinette Devroye, were forced to follow. Mme. Devroye's father, who was 75, being exhausted, asked to be put on a cart. He was refused and forced to continue on foot under threats of being killed. The sufferings of this pitiful group can be imagined when, after a short while, the least unfortunate had one child on the back and held two by the hand. The little ones were crying. About 6 o'clock in the evening we reached the Boulevard Tirlemont at Louvain. Some German troops were halted there. The soldiers took their rifles and made as if to fire at the mass. We were hustled to the Station Square. In the Boulevard Tirlemont there were

smouldering houses where the fire was dying down. The Station Square was destroyed. When the poor fugitives reached the square the soldiers on the station side opened fire. There was a mad flight among the ruins. I held one of my nephews by the hand. I received two wounds on the left arm, a little above the elbow. One bullet passed right through, the other remained, and is still there. I fell down, dragging the child down with me. My sister picked me up and wished to take me away, but the Germans shouted: "She's ours. She is hit." My sister entreated these brutes to allow her to take me away, and went with me about 20 yards. She could not continue, for the Germans came up and fired. I was hit in the stomach. I fell down and lost consciousness. When I came to, half an hour later, I was still on the pavement. I began to scream and a soldier picked me up. He put me in a chair in the first-class waiting room. A German doctor came and examined me, and, having cut away my bodice, made an injection. I heard him say: "She's a brave lass. There's nothing more to be done. She's past help." Then he went away. Some time afterwards he returned. I asked to be taken to Louvain Hospital, saying that I felt very bad. He refused, saying that I would be imprisoned at Aix-la-Chapelle. He left me. My wounds had not been dressed. Three hundred soldiers came into the waiting room and took up quarters for the night. One of them made inquiries after me, saying that it was he who had picked me up. I thanked him. An hour later the doctor returned with a stretcher, and told them to lay me on it. As the soldiers were asleep and did not hear, he knocked on the floor with a rifle and repeated his order. As I did not wish to go to Germany I asked to be taken to Tirlemont, where I had relatives, who were nuns there. The doctor gave an order, but I don't know to what effect. I was laid on the seat of a reserved compartment. They put on the other seat a German soldier, whose chest had been crushed by a falling wall in the town. The Germans came and looked in the carriage at me out of curiosity. One of them was ordered to look after the two wounded in the compartment. He brought me drink and put cold water compresses on my head. On the way he said to me: "You are a brave girl. I live at Essen. Come and see me when the war is over. I am married, but that's no matter." Then he kissed my hand. At Tirlemont I was taken out. When I was put on the platform the same German came up and made the same proposition as in the train, and again kissed my hand. Immediately afterwards I found that a ring which had cost 100 francs, as well as the money I had hidden in my dress, had disappeared. I was taken to the German receiving station, where the doctor sent me to the Convent of the Sisters of Our Lady, but I could not find a refuge there. I was taken to the hospital, where I was admitted. It was 4 o'clock when, for the first time, I received proper attention from Dr. Noël. I was there under treatment for eleven weeks. They wanted to send me to Germany. My pass there had been signed when my family, with whom I had communicated, succeeded after two days in taking me to Holland. I arrived there at 5 a.m. on the 1st November, after an 18-hour journey on a cart laden with furniture.

14. DEPOSITION OF MME. CLARA BOEYÉ, WIFE OF FRANCOIS TEURLINCKX, PRINTER,
OF AERSCHOT.

On Friday, the 28th August, I was taken on foot to Louvain with the other inhabitants of Aerschot, young and old. There we had to pass the night on the manure in the stables of the Artillery Barracks. German soldiers came and slept among the women. Not far from me the Raskin girls were awakened by a soldier, who came and lay down by them. Mlle. Raskin called out, "Papa, I'm so frightened," and the German fled. Several incidents of this kind, and worse still, were rumoured to have occurred at Aerschot. Next morning we were released. "The King is a prisoner and Antwerp is in our hands," said the Germans.

When we reached the station road at Louvain we were fired at, and everyone fled into the houses which had been burnt down.

15. DEPOSITION OF X., SCHOOLMASTER.

About 9 a.m. on the 19th August the Germans made their entry into Aerschot. There was not a single Belgian soldier left in the town. The Belgian forces had evacuated it in the morning. I can testify that no shot was fired at the Germans. No one in the town made any such attempt. The Germans at once killed six men with the bayonet. These men were doing nothing. They were in the passage of a house. The Germans at once began to break open the cellar doors, and soon the majority of them were drunk. About 7 in the evening the Germans began to set fire to the church, and then they burned down two streets. During the night they broke all the windows and doors. Some of the inhabitants had fled. Others had taken refuge in their cellars. About 9 p.m. the Germans had taken the principal burgesses, I believe about 40; they led them into the fields, tied their hands behind them and threw them on to their knees. They kept them there all night, and began to shoot them about 5 in the morning.

On the evening of the 20th they were still looking for inhabitants who had not fled, and the next morning, about the same time, they put them to death. In the evening of that day they set fire to two large houses, belonging to M. Dehaas, the notary, and Mme. Daels. On the following day they plundered the whole town, and the furniture that remained unbroken was taken to the station and loaded into trains. At the Burgomaster's they unloaded five boats of grain, which was then taken to the station.

On the 26th and 27th all who were still there—men, women and children—were shut up in the church. About 8 in the evening about 30 men began to fire into the church, but no one was hit, as everyone lay down.

About 11 a.m. on the 28th August all the men, women and children were sent on foot to Louvain. There the Germans began to shoot at them. They fired in the direction of the houses and windows, but several of the fugitives were killed and wounded. All the Aerschot people had then to go and sleep in the stables of the Artillery Barracks.

On the 29th they were taken under escort to the Louvain Canal and there set free. On reaching Aerschot we were again taken prisoner by the Germans. The men were shut up in the church and the women in M. Fontaine's château.

On the evening of the 30th the women and children were liberated, but the men remained in the church until the 6th September. Then those over 45 were liberated, and the others, about 400, were put into cattle trucks about 6 o'clock in the evening and sent to Germany. We have had no news of them since.

On the 9th September the Belgian soldiers re-entered Aerschot. In five minutes there was not a German to be seen.

The worst of the pillage took place on the 28th and 29th. Apart from furniture and wine, stockings, shirts, handkerchiefs and bed linen were most coveted. What they could not take away they tore up and soiled.

I was a prisoner from the 30th August to the 3rd September, and do not know what happened during that time. I was also at Louvain on the 28th.

16. REPORT BY FATHER SIMON GOOVAERTS, SUPERIOR OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE FATHERS OF THE SACRED HEART, AND HIS COLLEAGUES, WHO WERE TAKEN WITH HIM TO GERMANY.

I. *In our Hospital at Aerschot, 19th to 28th August.*

The Damien Institute is just by the Malines gate of the town on the road from Lierre to Aerschot.

When the war broke out steps were taken to turn it into a Red Cross Hospital. It was officially recognised by the Central Committee of Brussels, under the description, "Hospital No. 1005. Province 5." Three doctors, Drs. Vermuylen, Bergen and Goossens, were attached to it. An operating theatre, with surgical instruments and dressings, had been established, and 200 beds were prepared.

On the 18th fugitives arrived from Montaigu, Tesselt, &c. We watched from our windows in the evening the smoke and flames of the fires in the districts near by. Two Brothers of the Congregation of Our Lady of Mercy, Brother Adalbert and Brother Amand Spitaels, of the House at Montaigu, took refuge with us. They shared all our sufferings.

About 5.30 a.m. on the 19th August we heard the first cannon shots. In spite of the Red Cross flag which was flying conspicuously on our roof a number of bullets came through the windows, and forced us to take the beds from the rooms and put them in a large passage, which was better protected. There we attended to the first wounded who came in, about 20, all Belgian soldiers. We had been engaged in this work for about two hours when the Germans surrounded the house. We heard them break the doors and windows of the neighbouring houses with their rifles and axes. An officer, followed by some soldiers, entered the hospital, came upstairs and seized the Belgian flag which was flying beside the Red Cross flag. He threw it into the street, where the soldiers tore it to pieces and stamped on it. In the meantime they broke open the doors at both sides of the house. About 60 men, commanded by an officer, broke roughly into the house, tore off or unwound the bandages of the wounded to make sure that there was no deceit, and made a search through the rooms. They accused us of shooting at them, and, in spite of protests, they fetched all the hospital staff out into the street, where they made us line up in front of the house with some wounded soldiers they had forced to get up and some civilians whom they had just arrested. To the Superior, who demanded an explanation, the officer stated that the Major declared that he had seen three shots fired from the house. He kept on repeating on every denial, "Der Major hat es gesagt" ("The Major said so"). A superior officer, who was riding by and from whom the officer respectfully asked for orders, ordered us to be shot. As we continued to protest our innocence and to explain that the retreating Belgian forces had surrounded the house and fired from behind it, he at last, after 20 minutes' argument, consented to go and find the General.

He had scarcely departed when the fighting began again round us. The returning Belgians swept the street (we were told with a motor machine gun). The Germans fled outside the town, but, though several of our guards took shelter, they kept us in sight and forced us to remain under fire. Three civilians were killed by our side. At last the remaining Germans took to flight and we went back into the house.

Shortly afterwards about a dozen of the Fathers and Brethren were shot at as they left the house and were obliged to take shelter at the civilian hospital. While there they were asked several questions by a superior officer who came in. In spite of his brassard, he asked one if he had joined in the fighting, declaring, "We do not recognise the Red Cross in Belgium." We take this opportunity of stating that, whenever we claimed our status as Red Cross attendants we were met by contemptuous smiles and comments, which clearly shewed that they thought nothing of this. The officer then ordered them to be kept in the hospital, had them counted by a subaltern officer, and told the dispenser that if anyone was missing when he returned he, the dispenser, would be shot. Two hours later they were ordered to remove the Belgian wounded from their own hospital to the Damien Institute, as the hospital was to be reserved for the German wounded. Among the wounded thus removed one was *in extremis* and died just as he arrived.

In the meantime the officer who had first arrested us, had returned to the hospital. He said that the general had ordered us to be spared, and asked for two Fathers to go with him to bring in a wounded man (a civilian) some distance away. Shortly after other Fathers and Brethren went out to bring in wounded. In spite of their Red Cross brassards they were fired at several times. Father Hélonius de Busschere and Brother Willebrord Slaats, both Dutchmen, brought a wounded man in from the street. Father Camille Busard, also a Dutchman, was preparing to bring in another. Brother Willebrord wished to rejoin him. In our corridor he had three shots fired at him by Uhlans. At the first shot he threw himself down and happily escaped. Not seeing the others return, Father Hélonius went to meet them; he had hardly got into the corridor in sight of the soldiers in the street before he was fired at twice. Fortunately he was not hit. Father Camille Busard, while attending to a wounded man in the street, was seized by the Germans, put behind a cannon, and for an hour was taken along the Louvain road. During the whole journey he was being continually insulted and threatened with death. At last through his protests they decided to release him, and he was given a safe conduct, which enabled him to return to the house, but not without having to undergo many further outrages.

In the afternoon they brought us some wounded Germans, so that the number of patients was about 80. Later they came to fetch these wounded Germans, to take them to the hospital.

Next day a mounted officer came into the courtyard and made a rapid inspection. He told the Superior that the Burgomaster of Aerschot had treacherously killed a colonel while he sat at table, and added that the Burgomaster had been shot.

At our request, on the 21st and following days, two German surgeons came to treat our wounded. We have nothing but praise for them.

Towards evening on the 20th, in spite of the Superior's protests, we were forced to put up 1,100 men. The Major himself gave this number. The whole night was spent in giving these men, several of whom were drunk, food and drink. Each man had a bottle of champagne or gin. Next morning we collected 800 bottles.

The whole night the patients, several of whom were feverish, were unable to sleep. The German surgeon, when asked during the night to attend to a wounded man, refused to do so.

Next evening, after making his preliminary arrangements, the Major sent for the Superior. He asked the number of wounded under care and whether the wounds were serious or slight, and expressed astonishment that we were not under military guard, blamed the troops who had come before for having left us at liberty, and ended by stating that it was his duty to make us all prisoners and send us to Germany. Next day, however, he received orders to continue his march, and set out without disturbing us.

Shortly after their departure the Superior asked a German doctor to examine a wounded man who was causing him anxiety. The doctor at once agreed. When he arose after examining the wound (a bullet in the stomach) the wounded man said to him bitterly: "I must die, mustn't I, doctor?" "No, indeed," replied the doctor, "seeing that it is three days since you were wounded." "But I feel that I must die," said the wounded man. "Your soldiers are the cause of it. When I was wounded they forced me with their rifle butts to walk 200 yards." The doctor went away, saying to the Superior: "He's done for, that's evident." And he added with emphasis, "It's shameful."

This was not an isolated case. Several of the wounded under our care told us that, while prisoners on the field of battle, a major made them sit on the ground between each other's legs and ordered his men to shoot them. "Töten sie die Schweine" ("Kill the pigs"). Fourteen out of twenty were killed and six escaped. Those who escaped and came under our care were sent to Germany. We met them again at Sennelager Camp, near Paderborn.

On the 21st August, having no more food, owing to our having continually to supply many German soldiers, we were forced to apply to the German authorities, who obtained for us meat and bread every day until we were arrested.

During the days that followed the Fathers and Brethren, aided by some devoted young men, searched the neighbourhood for wounded and went to bury the dead, having first obtained the written authority of the Kommandantur. Besides our wounded soldiers we also had at our hospital four women and several civilians and children. One child, a year old, had been wounded in the thigh by a bayonet while in its mother's arms. Several civilians were burnt, and also had gunshot wounds. They said that when the soldiers were setting the houses on fire they shot at the suffocating inmates as they tried to escape. We several times put this question to the wounded civilians whom we tended: "Do you think that the inhabitants were firing?" Every time their reply was emphatic: "No one fired."

On the 26th the devoted priest of Gelrode, M. Dergent, brought us three wounded civilians on a cart. In spite of the strong remonstrances of the Superior, who warned him of the danger he ran in departing at once, he was resolved to return to his parish. We learned afterwards that he was ill-treated, shot, and thrown into the Démer.

During these sad days several of the Red Cross hospital attendants were killed. M. Alphonse van Opstal, who had spent a whole day helping us, was found next day dead in front of his house. M. van de Kerckhove was wounded in the arm and attended by us. M. Prosper Mertens, Secretary of the Red Cross Committee, was executed. M. van Krickinge, the architect, was shot. Two others, whose names we do not know, were taken away with their hands tied behind them. We never learned what became of them.

We ourselves had to undergo continual visits from officers and men, who often threatened us. We were several times subjected to a search, and each time we were asked if we had arms or officers in the house. On the first search the officer, on entering the Superior's room, caught sight of a map of Belgium on the wall. He at once made a sign to a soldier to tear it down with his bayonet, saying, "Belgien besteht nicht mehr" ("Belgium no longer exists"). They kept on accusing the priests of being *francs-tireurs*, of having gouged out the eyes of their wounded soldiers, and of having received arms from the Government to distribute among the people, &c. The day after the occurrences at Louvain the commandant of Aerschot unexpectedly arrived at the hospital, accompanied by two officers. He sent for the Superior and angrily told him the (German) story of what happened there. One of them said that he had seen priests firing at him. They asked the Superior if he answered for his staff. Upon his replying in the affirmative, the commandant repeated to him what he had said two days before: "If the least thing happens I burn down the whole monastery." One of the officers, who had come from Louvain, said as he went away, "All you priests will be taken to Germany."

It is our duty to give an instance which shows how little the Germans observed the provisions of the Geneva Convention. For two days a post of three men were placed at the attic windows in the roof. They observed through field-glasses, and signalled to a non-commissioned officer in the courtyard, all the movements of the Belgian troops operating in the neighbourhood. Several times we had alarms raised by drunken soldiers. For eight days we saw the Germans methodically plundering and setting fire to the town. Large vans stopped in front of the houses, everything that could be taken away was loaded on to them, all the rest was broken or spoilt, and the houses were then set alight. One day, when a company departed, the Superior saw two soldiers some distance behind the others staggering under the weight of a great basketful of plunder. On top were two heavy bronze candelabra.

About 7 p.m. on the 27th, firing began alongside the monastery wall. About 3.30 a.m. an officer, followed by four men, entered one of the rooms where wounded were lying, and told the Father on duty to put out the light in the room occupied by the wounded on the first floor. Previously this room had always been lit at night.

Next day, the 28th, a detachment of about 40 men under three officers entered the hospital. The officer sent for the Superior and the manager, and said to them roughly, "Das Haus wird geraümt" ("You will leave the house"). The Superior asked for an explanation: "Sie haben geschossen und Signale gegeben" ("You have been firing and signalling"). "It is false," replied the Superior. "That does not matter," said the officer. "I have my orders and I am executing them." He told the two Fathers to stand against the wall, and placed three soldiers opposite them with their bayonets pointed at them. Then he told a passing Brother to assemble the whole community. "If one is missing," he blustered, "the Superior will be shot." Next day, when we were prisoners in Aerschot church, a non-commissioned officer confessed to us: "Sie haben geschossen! Es war eine Schweinerei. Es sind unsere Soldaten gewesen, aber Sie sind bestraft worden" ("You were firing! It's a dirty business. It was our own men, but you are punished for it").

Then all the wounded were made to come out. Those who could stand had to line up in the yard against the wall, and stay there for some minutes with their hands raised. Several who were made to get up were in their shirts. One fainted. The beds of those who could not get up were taken into the yard, and some of the Fathers and Brethren were forced to carry them to the hospital under escort. On the way they were frequently insulted. In order to clothe the wounded soldiers, things were taken haphazard. Clerical hats were even thrown at them in derision out of the windows.

One of the Fathers was saying Mass when the soldiers invaded the house. The officer sent him word to stop. The soldier entrusted with this order did not obey it. He waited until the priest had finished.

In the meantime the whole house was being searched. At one time an officer, holding a cigar box, came to the Superior, and opening the box asked, "Do you know these cartridges?" "No," replied the Superior. "They were found in your room." "I have never seen them. Moreover, for over eight days, by your officer's orders, the door of my room and the whole house have been open to everyone day and night. I can answer for nothing." This search was made by the soldiers alone, in the absence of the persons interested, and the cartridges were brought to the officers, who were chatting together outside, by four soldiers. Shortly after two officers motioned to the Superior to follow them into his room. Everything there, as throughout the whole house, was upside down. An officer pointed out to the Superior the place where he said the cartridges were found. The Father remarked that it was unlikely that, after ten days of German occupation and several searches made in that very room, one should find a box of cartridges on top of a desk in the sight of everybody. The officer, after reflection, seemed convinced. "That is true," he said, and added, "Don't worry about it. I'll see to it." He kept his word, for during the inquiry the cartridges were not mentioned. After a search of two hours, during which that portion of the community who were not engaged in removing the wounded, had to remain motionless in the street under the guard of soldiers, they were ordered to go to their rooms, each one being accompanied by a soldier. When they got there, several noticed that things such as watches, chains, shoes, money, &c., had been stolen. They were

told to pack in a bag necessities for a fortnight, that is, "till the end of the war," said the officer. When they were ready they were allowed, at the request of the Superior, to eat some food and then were taken into the street, the soldiers surrounded them, and they were marched to the church. On the way we were continually being insulted by the soldiery. Twenty times at least the officer commanding the escort ordered silence, saying to those who were insulting us: "Die Leute haben nichts gemacht, sie haben unsere Verwundeten verpflegt" ("These people have done nothing. They have been tending our wounded").

II. At Aerschot Church, 28th August to 6th September.

In the street in front of the church we were searched from head to foot. We had to empty our pockets and put everything at our feet. Our razors and pocket knives were taken away. Other quite harmless things, such as a crucifix or a nickel statuette, were examined, weighed in the hand for a long time, and then put on one side as dangerous articles. All this was deposited on the High Altar. There were added by stealth some soldiers' knives of a very respectable size, and repeated protests from us to a non-commissioned officer were necessary before they were removed. We never recovered our razors and knives. When we had been roughly ordered to empty our pockets and place everything on the pavement, several soldiers even took the opportunity, without any sense of shame, to pocket anything they fancied, with remarks such as this: "These pigs will have no more use for them."

In front of the church they found on one Brother a box containing a stomachic remedy. They did not believe him and they made him take some, remarking that it might be a powder for poisoning soldiers.

During this search of our persons soldiers gathered round and insulted us. The non-commissioned officer of the guard several times drove them off. At last, as they kept on coming back, he threatened them with his bayonet, saying: "If you don't go away I will use my weapon."

After the search we were taken into the choir, which we were forbidden to leave, nor were we to speak to the men, women and children who filled the church.

Shortly afterwards the reverend priest of Boisschot and his curate, the reverend priest of Tremeloo with his curate, and the priest of Heyst, M. Goor, arrived and shared our misfortunes. We were put on bread and water. The first two nights we slept on the stalls. On the third we were told to take the altar carpet and lie on the pavement. On the last three days we received two trusses of straw—there were 29 of us to share them. During the last days some charitable persons and the nuns provided food for us. Sometimes they were allowed in, but often were sent away.

On the first two days there were no sanitary conveniences. We were obliged to go to the exterior wall of the church. Afterwards they dug a large trench in the old churchyard, about 20 yards from the church. They nailed a beam and a plank to four stakes. These public latrines were made among the graves and bones protruded among the excrements. At night they put about 20 buckets in the church. The same buckets were used to provide drinking water and water for washing. The air was often unbreathable, and sleep impossible from the crying of the children who were at first imprisoned with us. The first three days we were forbidden to leave the church to get some fresh air, but afterwards we were brought out in groups for half an hour at a time. We had to walk round the old graveyard, keeping distance. There were 17 sentries with fixed bayonets over us (and we were only 29!). As a rule the soldiers in the street gathered round and mocked at us. When we reached the church we were told that we should be taken to Louvain that day. The next afternoon, as they persisted in refusing to let us see the Commandant at Aerschot, we wrote to him to protest against our arrest, invoking the provisions of the Geneva Convention, and to demand our release. No notice was taken of the letter. Among us were Brother Silvain van Volsem, a naturalised American, and Brother Adalbert Graste, a Dutchman. In spite of their protests and repeated proffer of their papers for examination, they were only released after two days' detention. Father Camille Busard and Brother Willebrord Slaats, both of whom were Dutch, but had no papers with them, were only released on the 5th September, after nine days' detention, although they frequently asked to be allowed to see a Dutch Consul in order to establish their identity.

During the first day or two they released all children under 16 and all men over 50. This measure was not extended to the priests and monks. One of us, Father Rufin Vreugde, was 75, and M. Goor, the priest of Heyst, was 65. When we asked that they too should be released, we received the reply: "Sie sind extra" ("They are not included").

One evening, several days after we were imprisoned, two officers came to the choir, revolver in hand, and asked in a menacing tone which of us had *the night before* fired shots out of the windows of the Convent (of the nuns)!

Another day an officer came and gave out in the church that soldiers in the town had again been fired at and, if another shot were fired, the order of the Commandant was that the 400 men in the church should be shot, the priests first, he added. At that time the Germans had been masters of an almost deserted town for a fortnight, and, according to their own account, there were 6,000 of them. During our imprisonment in the church an old man burst a blood-vessel and died. He had been coughing all night as he lay on the pavement. Another went mad and tried to commit suicide. He made a fair-sized wound in his neck with a piece of broken glass. One night our guards got drunk. They had discovered under the sacristy the cellar

where the Communion wine was kept. We heard a non-commissioned officer say : " He who does not bring back his two bottles won't get a third."

About 5 p.m. on the 6th September, the Commandant at Aerschot entered the church, followed by several officers. He had it announced that he had just received orders that we were to be sent to Germany immediately. We were put in columns of fours and taken to the station. There were about 300 of us. As we left the church the Superior went up to an officer and pointed out Brother Rufin Vreugde, aged 75, to him, asking as a favour that he might be spared the journey and left at the hospital with the nuns. He was refused, and the poor old man, whose legs were all swollen through his long detention in the church, had to hobble painfully to the station on the arm of another Brother. On our departure we underwent a Calvary of 36 hours, that is, during the whole journey to Sennelager Camp. About 100 soldiers accompanied us to the station, indulging, without ceasing, in the most gross and ignoble insults against religion and priests. They belonged to the Landwehr and Landsturm.

There was a train in the station consisting of two third-class carriages and some goods trucks. The Commandant made us enter the carriages to the great disgust of the soldiers, several of whom were particularly violent. They wished to take us from the others and execute us on the spot, saying that we were not worth the coal of the engine. The Commandant had to exercise all his authority to protect us. At one time he turned to a body of officers and men who were more violent than the others and said defiantly : " I am master here." Some of the Fathers believe that they heard him say, " These Fathers are innocent."

Later on in Germany, during our examination by the Commission of Inquiry, the fact that they had reserved railway carriages for us made a great impression. It was looked upon as a confirmation of our innocence.

This was not the only consideration that Commandant Menne shewed us. On Saturday, the 5th September, he came to the church and told us that, as the next day was Sunday, he would allow us to celebrate Mass. Seeing our wretched condition, he made the observation ; " You would have been spared all these miseries if you had not fired." The Superior at once protested that none of us had done so. He received the reply, " No, *not you*, but at Louvain priests shot at and mutilated German soldiers." It is interesting to note that at that time the Commandant knew that the charge upon which we had been arrested was unfounded.

They then made us enter the carriages. In each compartment there were four prisoners and a soldier with fixed bayonet. The guards were very decent and talked politely to us. They had obviously received instructions to do so. At Cologne the guard (Landsturm) was relieved, and replaced by soldiers of the first line and Landwehr, who were very surly. Their first care was to make us take off our boots to see whether we had concealed knives in them.

We took 12 hours to reach Liège. During the whole journey the food was insufficient. At every station at which the train stopped we were insulted, especially at Tirlemont, Landen and Cologne. Once in Germany the train stopped at almost every station. The people had obviously been told of the arrival of the train, for everywhere it stopped there was a crowd which grossly insulted us. At one station the mob violently shook the door of one compartment (which fortunately was locked), and shouted to the soldiers : " Give them to us. We will do for them."

The Red Cross ladies were particularly violent. They handed food and drink to the soldiers, saying, " That's for you only. Don't give anything to those *Schweinhunde*."

At Ohligs our Red Cross brassards were rudely taken away and we were told they would be returned later. We several times asked for them, saying where they were taken from us, but we never saw them again. Later, at Sennelager Camp, our cards of identification and all our papers were taken from us, with the same assurance and the same result.

At 3 a.m. on the 8th September we arrived at Sennelager near Paderborn.

III. *Our Stay at Sennelager and at the Grand Seminary of Munster.*

On our arrival at the camp we had to stand in the open for three hours. Several hundred German soldiers gathered round us and made merry about us, until we were taken to a canteen, where we were given a piece of bread and some black water, which they called coffee. Next day we had to wait until 4 in the afternoon before we got any food. We were then given soup, in which a piece of pork, which we had to get with our fingers, was floating. We had no spoons, as they said there were none left. Some had to drink from the bowls ; others succeeded in borrowing spoons from other prisoners. Suffering acutely from thirst, we were all day under a hot sun about 13 yards from a pump, to which we were not allowed to go for water.

On the first night we slept in a stable, without straw or bedclothes, on the pavement of the horse-boxes. Next night a soldier, indignant at such treatment, took pity on us and of his own accord gave us some straw, which he took from a shed.

Hundreds of soldiers were worse treated than we were. They had to pass the night in the open, lying on the grass, exposed to cold and rain. Two hundred English prisoners, who arrived about the same time as ourselves, had to wait half the day without food under a burning sun before anyone deigned to trouble about them. Several of them, who were wounded, overcome by fatigue and exhaustion, lay down in the dust. We heard wounded Frenchmen and Englishmen complain that they had been there for two days and had not yet seen a doctor.

On our arrival Major Bach began to inveigh against us in French : " Oh ! Here's the Church. All of you *francs-tireurs* ! You Catholic priests are the ones who get arms from the Belgian

Government to hand out to civilians. You are wretches. You fired at our men, didn't you ? " And when we vigorously protested : " Oh yes, we know that. They never have done anything ! " He went on like that for a long time. Then he asked if any of us knew German. The Superior came forward. Pointing him out to the group of priests and monks, he said : " There's your commandant. Anyone who disobeys him will be shot." Then he said to the Superior : " I hope you are ashamed of wearing those clothes. Have you any money ? " When told that we had, he said that we should have to buy laymen's clothes, which he would have sent. And in the afternoon we were taken to a canteen, where we had to put on prison garb, trousers and coat of unbleached canvas, with two little dark blue ribbons on the breast as a distinctive mark. We were made to pay for this convict dress three times its value, so the (German) soldiers there said. They then made us change our money at 1.50 fr. for each mark. As we protested and several did not want to change their money, we were threatened that we should be shot if any foreign money were found on us. This measure was only applied to us. When this profitable transaction was over we were taken to a shed, where our hair was cut so short as to make us ridiculous. They spared us the treatment meted out to other prisoners, with which we were also threatened, viz., the cutting of the hair and beard on one side of the head only. Then we had to go to the bathroom. We had to strip, and then we and about 30 civilians had to await the pleasure of the attendants for about half an hour. We then were examined by a doctor. When at last we were put under the douche, instead of giving us a cold and a hot douche like the rest, we were drenched with boiling water. They said there was no more cold ! In the meantime our clerical attire had been baked. When we came out we were forbidden to resume it. We asked several times, but our request was not granted. Later on our clothes were eventually sent to us at the insistent request of the Sub-Regent of the Grand Seminary of Münster, but three-quarters of them were missing, and those sent were quite unwearable, as they had been cut to pieces and pierced by bayonets.

According to the statement of Major Bach, which was attached to the clothes, they had been damaged by being stored. That is the official version, but a Catholic newspaper declares that they had been used for parodies of religion and torn out of hatred for religion. Another newspaper states that the soldiers on sentry duty used them to keep themselves warm. Other newspapers, including the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, if our recollection is right, said that we had been made to change our clothes to save us from the insults of the Belgian soldiers imprisoned with us. We emphatically protest against this suggestion. We were never insulted at the camp by any Belgian soldier. We found about 20 whom we had had in our hospital. They always expressed the greatest sympathy for us. As to the thousands of French and English soldiers whom we met in the camp, not one said an uncivil word to us. On the other hand, the German soldiers frequently insulted us during our stay in the camp.

On the first day we consulted as to how we should inform the Bishop of Paderborn that we were at the camp. An obliging soldier undertook to bring to the camp the priest of Neuhaus, the next village. The priest acceded to our request and undertook to inform his Lordship. He also rendered us other services.

After the comedy of the bath, we had to attend before Major Bach, who made us surrender our chalices. He made a note of them and put them into store. He asked one Father his name and who his heirs were, " so as to be able to send it to them when you are shot," he said, sniggering. When he was shewn a little vase for the last unction of the dying, he said : " Ah ! Ah ! You brought that for yourselves. You knew that you were guilty and would be shot." " No," replied one of the Fathers. " We used it for your wounded." When these formalities were over he came back to us and indulged in the pleasure of invective against us, insinuating that we should be shot.

The same day we were made to take up a position under guard near the commandant's office, and a general (we believe, General von Bissing), came towards us, followed by several officers. " Who are you ? " he asked. " Belgian priests," we answered. " Ah ! You are *francs-tireurs* then ? " We all protested. " Then why are you here ? What was it you did ? " We replied that we had done no wrong and did not understand why we were arrested. He smiled incredulously. Then, turning to one of his officers, he said : " Hold an inquiry and try to separate the innocent from the guilty, and then report to me."

The inquiry began at once. We had to appear before a kind of magistrate, who made us relate all that had happened since the day the Germans entered Aerschot. He did not seem hostile, and he was even much affected by the sight of our Red Cross identity cards. " They could not arrest you," he said to the Superior. He also was very indignant that our brassards had been taken, and carefully noted the place where that was done. When all had given evidence he drew up a long report in German and, when the Superior asked him what was going to be done with us, he replied : " The matter is quite clear. You will probably be released." Next day he told us that we would be sent to the Grand Seminary of Münster. We asked him for our papers, which we had had to hand over. He replied that they would be returned later. We are still waiting for them.

On the 10th September, in spite of our repeated requests, we received no food until 3 p.m. It was pure negligence, for they several times promised to attend to us, but nothing came. At 3 o'clock we were given some soup. We had no bread that day. About 5 o'clock we were sent to Paderborn Station. They marched quickly. Old Brother Rufin Vreugde, who was 75, did not march quickly enough for the soldiers and was treated to the butt end of a rifle.

We left Paderborn about 6 p.m. and reached Münster about 7 the next morning. We were taken out of the station by a side entrance and put into a tramcar with lowered blinds, which took us to the Seminary. We remained there for three months, and were extremely well treated by the authorities there. For the first month we were under a military guard. A post was stationed in the corridor and the watch was so strict that, for the first fortnight, in spite of our requests, we were not allowed to take exercise in the yard. Our first care was to ask for our clerical clothes. They promised that steps would be taken. After six weeks' waiting we received some rags that could not be worn. We claimed an indemnity of 2,000 fr. This claim was presented by the non-commissioned officer, who had himself valued our clothes at that amount. We received no reply. In order to enable us to leave off our convict dress the Seminary authorities had to make an appeal to the priests of the diocese, who sent us body linen and clerical garments.

Two days after our arrival at the Seminary, a fresh inquiry was begun. We had to appear in turn before a *Kriegsrat* composed of two officers. We were again asked the same question, which was so often put to us during those four months: "What did you do?" As one of the Fathers remarked to the president, it was curious that he should not have received a report about us from the Commandant at Aerschot, setting forth the grounds for our arrest. He agreed that it was curious. When we asked why we were arrested and upon what charge, they were unable to tell us. They searched in vain and were as much puzzled as we were. Three weeks after the inquiry the officer who had presided at our examination came to the Seminary and gave us some hope that we would soon be released. He sent for the Superior and said to him, almost triumphantly: "Now I know why you were arrested. The report from our forces has arrived. Our troops at Aerschot were fired at a good deal, and they therefore arrested the whole population and consequently you also."

There was therefore no charge against us! That evening the Regent of the Seminary told the Superior that the Bishop had heard from General von Bissing himself, then military Governor of Münster, that we were to be released shortly. We remained there for nearly two months longer. We were never allowed to receive visits or to go into the town.

Yet it was officially recognised that no charge was made against us. These are the very words used by General von Bissing in a letter which he sent to the newspapers which were attacking and libelling us. Three times, to our knowledge, did General von Bissing defend us publicly in the newspapers. We saw the article in which he declared that "the military inquiry ordered by him had revealed no charge against us," and in which he threatened those who should continue to libel us.

But then, the public might ask, why were they arrested?

This is the version of the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*:—

"When the German forces entered Aerschot on the 19th August, the Belgian soldiers were in occupation of the Damien Institute. In spite of the protests of the monks, the Belgians fired at the German troops. As there was no time to hold an immediate inquiry the monks were arrested and brought to Germany, where their case was considered. The inquiry has not resulted in incriminating them. On the contrary, special thanks are due to them for the devoted care which they gave to the wounded German soldiers."

The story is ingenious. It shews a desire to exonerate both the monks and the German authorities who arrested and deported them. It was necessary to explain both our arrest and our approaching release.

Now, it proves:—

(i) That the military authorities are free from blame in arresting the monks of the Damien Institute, since the German troops were fired at from their monastery.

(ii) That the monks deserve no censure, since the inquiry established that it was the Belgian soldiers who fired in spite of the protests of the monks.

Once more the assertion is made that German troops were fired at from a Red Cross hospital. Unfortunately the story is a pure invention and we formally contradict it.

(i) Belgian soldiers never occupied the monastery. When the Germans entered there were only about 20 wounded men there. The Belgian troops had already retreated.

(ii) No shot was fired from the monastery.

For two days we had a guard of ten men in the house. In conversation with the Superior, the non-commissioned officer in command said: "We have a bad Major. Our men have made up their minds to give him the first bullet when we go under fire." Does not this explain some of the stories about *francs-tireurs*?

On the 19th December, after four months' captivity, we were given our passports. In the letter informing the Seminary authorities of the decision, General von Bissing added, or caused to be added: "No money will be provided for the journey."

Again it was the priests of the diocese who found the money to enable us to leave Münster. We reached Holland on the 20th December.

CHAPTER III.

THE SACK AND MASSACRE AT ANDENNE.*

SECTION I.

STATEMENT OF THE FACTS.

The town of Andenne is situated on the right bank of the Meuse, between Namur and Huy. A bridge connects it with the village of Seilles, which is built along the left bank of the river. Before the war it had a population of 7,800.

On the morning of Wednesday, the 19th August, German troops arrived at Andenne and wished to cross to the left side. The advance guard of Uhlans who had preceded them reported that the bridge was unusable. A Belgian infantry regiment had blown it up about 8 o'clock the same day. The Uhlans retired after seizing the communal money chest and ill-treating the Burgomaster, Dr. Camus. For some days before this he had taken most minute precautions to prevent the inhabitants from participating in the fighting. Notices ordering them to remain quiet had been placarded.† All weapons had been deposited at the Town Hall. The authorities had taken steps to explain personally to some of the inhabitants what their duties were.

The main body of the Germans arrived at Andenne in the afternoon. The regiments wandered about the town and its neighbourhood while waiting for a bridge of boats to be built. It was not completed till the next day.

The first contact between the troops and the inhabitants was peaceful. The troops made requisitions which were satisfied. At first the soldiers paid for their purchases and the drinks served to them in the cafés. But towards evening the situation became worse. Whether it was that discipline was relaxed or that the intoxicants began to have their effect, the soldiers ceased to pay. The inhabitants were frightened and dared not object. No dispute occurred, and the night was quiet.

On Thursday, the 20th August, the bridge was finished, and a great number of troops defiled through the town on their way to the left bank of the Meuse. The inhabitants watched them from indoors. Suddenly, about 6 in the evening, a shot was heard in the street, followed by a volley. The troops halted and began to fall into disorder. The men lost their heads and fired at random. A machine gun was placed at cross roads and began to fire at the houses. A gun from a battery sent three shells into the town in three different places.

At the first shot the residents in the streets through which the troops were marching, guessing what would happen, took refuge in their basements, or climbing over the garden walls or hedges, went to seek safety in the fields or more distant cellars. A certain number of men, who would not or could not flee, were soon killed.

The sacking and plundering of the houses in the principal streets of the town at once commenced. Windows, shutters and doors were hacked open and the furniture was broken or destroyed. The soldiers rushed into the cellars, got drunk, broke the bottles of wine that they were unable to take away, and finally set light to some of the houses. During the night the firing began again at intervals. The whole terrified population hid in their cellars.

The next day, Friday, the 21st August, at 4 a.m., the soldiers spread through the town, drove all the people into the streets, forcing men, women and children to march with their hands above their heads. Those who did not obey quickly enough, or did not understand the orders given them in German, were at once struck down. Those who tried to fly were shot. It was then that Dr. Camus, against whom the Germans appeared to nourish a peculiar hate, was killed.

A Flemish watchmaker, not long established in the town, came out of his house, at the orders of the soldiers, supporting his father-in-law, an old man of over 80. Naturally he could not hold his hands up. A soldier rushed at him and struck him on the neck with an axe. He fell down dying in front of his house. His wife

* See also the note of the 31st October, 1915, by Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, at p. 335 of the present volume, and the work of Professor Massart, of Brussels University, entitled: *Comment les Belges résistent à la domination allemande* (Payot & Co., Paris), in which, on pp. 402-408, numerous proclamations placarded at Andenne during the first days of the German occupation are reproduced.

† See also on p. 130, note †, the Notice published by the Governor of the Province of Namur, on August 7th, 1914.

tried to help him. She was pushed back into the house and had to watch her husband's death agony, helplessly. A soldier threatened to shoot her with a revolver if she crossed the threshold.

In the meantime the people were hustled to the Place des Tilleuls. Old men and sick people, and even the paralysed, were taken there on wheelbarrows; others were helped or carried by their relatives. The men were separated from the women and children. All were searched, but no weapon was found on them. One poor wretch had on him some Belgian and German cartridge cases. He was at once seized and placed on one side. The same thing happened to a shoemaker who had had a sore on his finger for a month. A mechanic was arrested because he had a spanner, which was considered to be a weapon. Another was seized because his face seemed to express indifference or disgust at what was occurring. All these poor fellows were at once shot in the presence of the crowd. They died bravely.

Under orders from the officers, the soldiers took 40 or 50 men haphazard from the crowd. They were marched away and shot, some by the Meuse and the others near the police station.

The men were kept in the square for a long time. Two wounded men were brought there, one with a shot wound in the chest and the other with a bayonet wound. They lay face downwards on the ground, reddening the dust with their blood, begging for water. The officers forbade the people to help them. One soldier was reprimanded for attempting to offer his water-bottle to them. They both died during the day.

While this scene was occurring at the Place des Tilleuls, other soldiers were going round, continuing their work of sacking, plundering and burning. Seven men of one family were taken to a field about 50 yards from the house of one of them. Some were shot and the others killed and mutilated with axes. A tall red-haired soldier, with a scar across his face, distinguished himself by the ferocity with which he mutilated the victims. A child was hacked to death in his mother's arms. A boy and a woman were shot.

About 10 a.m. the officers sent the women away, giving them orders to remove the dead and clear up the blood which defiled the streets and houses. About mid-day the surviving men, about 800 all told, were imprisoned as hostages in three small houses near the bridge. They were not allowed out on any pretext. They were so crowded as to be unable to sit down. Soon these prisons became noisome dens. Later on the women were desired to bring food to their relatives. Many of them, afraid of being raped, had fled. The hostages were not released until the following Tuesday.*

* After the sack of Andenne the Germans placarded the following notice :—

TO THE INHABITANTS OF ANDENNE.

By order of the German military authorities in occupation of the town of Andenne :

All the men are being kept as hostages.

For every shot fired at the German troops, AT LEAST two hostages will be shot.

The hostages will be fed by the women, who will bring food to the bridge at 6 p.m. and 8 a.m.

The women are strictly forbidden to talk to the hostages.

All streets and public places in the town will be immediately cleaned BY ALL THE WOMEN OF THE TOWN under pain of arrest.

It is formally forbidden to go out after 7 p.m. or before 7 a.m., under pain of severe punishment.

The dead will be at once buried without any ceremony.

Young persons over 14 and women must help whenever ordered.

Looking out of windows is strictly forbidden.

Andenne. 21st August, 1914.

By Order of the German Military Authorities.

The Deputy Burgomaster,
DR. LEDOYEN.

The Burgomaster designate,
E. DE JAER.

The Secretary, MONRIQUE.

PROCLAMATION.

(i) On and after *midday on Saturday, the 29th August, 1914*, all clocks must be set by German time (an hour earlier).

(ii) More than three people are forbidden to gather together, *under pain of fine*.

(iii) The AUTHORITY of the Commandant is necessary for persons wishing to go out after 8 p.m.

(iv) Weapons must be delivered up to the guard *at the Casino, by midday the 29th inst.*

If after the time stated any weapon is found in the houses, THE OCCUPIER WILL BE HANGED.

(v) The German soldiers demanding absolute quiet, workmen may at once return to work. The least rising by the inhabitants WILL RESULT IN THE COMPLETE DESTRUCTION OF THE TOWN, and the men will be hanged.

SIMONS, Lieutenant-Colonel-Commanding-in-Chief. BECKER, Captain-Commanding-in-Chief.

The passages in italics were written by hand in blank spaces. The signature of Simons was struck out.

The figures relating to the sack of Andenne are as follows : About 300 inhabitants were killed at Andenne and Seilles. About 200 houses were set on fire in the two places.* Many of the inhabitants have disappeared. Nearly all the houses were sacked and plundered. Pillage went on for several days.

The numerous inhabitants who have been examined unanimously say that the troops were not fired at.† Unable to understand the reason for the catastrophe which drenched the town with blood, they have formed numerous hypotheses. Many are convinced that Andenne was sacrificed in order to establish a reign of terror. They quote words which escaped from officers, tending to shew that the sack of the town had been planned beforehand. They report statements made in the villages by the troops marching on Andenne to the effect that they were going to burn down the town and kill all the inhabitants. They believe that among the causes of the massacre were the destruction of the bridge, the blocking of a tunnel close by, and the resistance of the Belgian forces. All protest that there was no justification or excuse for the behaviour of the German troops.

SECTION II.

CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE REPORT OF THE GERMAN MILITARY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY AND ITS APPENDICES.

The small number of German witnesses on the subject of the massacre at Andenne. The statement in Section I. has described the sack and massacre at Andenne. The pillage, which began on 20th August, 1914, lasted for days. As stated, about 200 houses were burned down and about 300 inhabitants were killed or shot dead at Andenne and Seilles, a place on the left bank of the Meuse, opposite Andenne.

One would naturally expect the German authorities to invoke, in justification of the behaviour of their troops, their habitual explanation that there were *francs-tireurs* there. This is not wanting. The "White Book" asserts that at Andenne, as at Aerschot, there was a popular rising (*Volksaufstand*). This assertion is absolutely false. The communal authorities had taken the most minute precautions to prevent any participation on the part of the inhabitants in the fighting. All weapons had been deposited at the Town Hall.

One would also expect to see the German theory supported by a large number of witnesses, whose evidence, while no doubt not capable of standing a serious critical examination, would nevertheless be such as to make an impression on the mind of an unsuspecting reader. But on the subject of the massacre at Andenne, in which

* Thirty-seven were destroyed at Andenne and 153 at Seilles. (Andenne and Seilles are only separated by the Meuse). In this connection it is not uninteresting to note that in a notice posted up at Liège on the 22nd August, by way of warning, General von Bülow declared (*inter alia*) that it was with his consent that the general in command *had caused the whole of Andenne to be set on fire* and that 100 people had been shot. The report of the Military Commission of Berlin relating to this town, while stating that about 200 people of Andenne were killed in their hiding places in the houses by the German soldiers (p. 107), makes no allusion to houses being burned. As to the inquiry by Sub-Lieutenant Götze, (App. B. 4), it dealt only with 37 houses burned down in the area of Andenne. Not a word was said about the destruction at Seilles.

† We may point out in this connection that recommendations to keep calm had not only been addressed to the population by the communal authorities of Andenne (see p. 128), but that the Civil Governor of the Province of Namur had, on his part, caused the following notice, dated August 7, 1914, to be placarded in all the communes. It is countersigned by the Military Governor.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF NAMUR.

Very Important Notice.

The Civil Governor invites the most serious attention of the inhabitants of the province to the very great danger which would result for civilians should they offer armed resistance to the enemy.

They must refrain absolutely from any action of the sort, as, indeed, it is their duty to do.

The national forces alone have the right to defend the country.

Any disregard of this recommendation would be calculated to provoke reprisals, incendiarism, &c.
Namur, August 7, 1914.

BARON DE MONTPELLIER.

Seen and approved,

Namur, August 7, 1914.

The Military Governor,

MICHEL.

It was in the Province of Namur, the scene of the hecatombs of Andenne (p. 130), Dinant (p. 204) and Tamines (pp. 104, 105) that the number of civilians massacred was highest; it exceeded 1,500 in the total of 5,000 civilians killed in Belgium.

many troops participated*—a massacre which is said to have been justified by particularly atrocious behaviour on the part of the civilian population (*Diesmal artete ihr Treiben zu einer Teufelei ohnegleichen aus*, p. 107)—for did not men and women throw boiling water on the soldiers!—one finds in the “White Book” only three depositions—one by a general, one by a major, and the third by a simple private.

The report of General von Langermann (App. B 1) is, moreover, mainly based on hearsay and not on personal observation (*wie mir berichtet wurde : wie uns später mitgeteilt wurde*, p. 109), and as for App. B 4, it contains the report of Sub-Lieutenant Götze, who, on the 5th January, 1915, held an inquiry among the inhabitants of Andenne, but was not himself present (at least he does not say so), at the events in the town in August, 1914.

One hundred German soldiers were scalded with boiling water.—According to Major von Polentz, commanding a battalion of the 2nd Regiment of Foot Guards, one hundred—the word is given in figures and also written in words—of his men were scalded with boiling water. It is really extraordinary that none of these hundred men were cited to testify on oath to this fact, and that no surgeon or Red Cross attendant was called to prove that he attended to wounds caused by burns of this nature. Neither Pte. Roleff nor General von Langermann, who was, on the 20th August, in command of the German forces at Andenne, speaks of boiling water being thrown. Nor is there any mention of it in Sub-Lieutenant Götze’s inquiry.

It can be stated most categorically that the charge made by Major von Polentz is an impudent lie. Even if this officer was at first so grossly deceived by appearances, the most elementary sense of honesty would have forced him to abandon his odious imputation. The German Military Commission of Inquiry of Berlin is not less guilty in reproducing, on the 29th March, 1915, this infamous charge, the falsity of which could not have been unknown to it. Yet it even accentuates the accusation. “Among the men under Major Polentz alone,” it states, “more than one hundred were injured by boiling water” (*durch Verbrühen*, p. 107).

The signal for attack was the ringing of bells.—Pte. Roleff, of the 11th Company of the 2nd Reserve Regiment of the Guard, seems to have been astounded at hearing the ringing of bells at the time when his company was in the main street. According to Major von Polentz, who is a Protestant (as also is Roleff), these bells rang at 6.30. That is, at the time when every day at that period of the year the Angelus is rung in Catholic countries. Assuming the statement to be true, there was absolutely nothing in the ringing of the bells that could have given the signal for attack.

The attack was planned in all its details in advance.—What is one to think of the allegation of General Baron von Langermann—based upon a communication made to him later—that afterwards there was found at the Burgomaster’s house a written document proving that the attack on the German troops by the population had been settled in all its details and was to take place at a time agreed upon?

What were the exact contents of this document, from what authority did it come, and whose signature did it bear? There is no information on the point. The general, although he uses it as an argument, never saw it. He was told of it; but by whom? Did his informant understand French and could he trust his judgment and memory? The general is not concerned about that. He was told of it, but took no pains to check the statement, or to give such details as would enable it to be identified later. It is in truth shameful to see a general adopt such a story, which does not even deserve contradiction, and reproduce it in an official document.

Can one be astonished after this at the light manner in which the inferior officers and men accept no matter what rumour, and interpret, in an unfavourable manner, no matter what indication, in order to overwhelm the Belgian people, without any regard for truth or justice? Such behaviour, which has caused the death of thousands of innocent Belgians, cannot be denounced with too much vehemence. It is sufficient, in order to do justice to the allegation of General von Langermann and to that of Major von Polentz (“Almost the whole population of Andenne and its suburbs had a hand in this affair,” App. B 2), to cite against them this statement of Lieutenant Colonel von Eulwege, which was sent to the “Pax” Association on the 8th December, 1914: “At Andenne everybody gives a different account of the events on the 20th August, which is doubtless explained by the fact that most of the people saw little of the fight, properly so-called, for terror-stricken, they had taken refuge in their cellars.”

* A whole brigade, composed of the 1st and 2nd Reserve Regiments of the Guard and a reserve battalion of the Jägers of the Guard, were in Andenne when the first shots were fired in the town, about 6 o’clock in the evening of the 20th August.

Pte. Roleff (App. B 3) relies on statements of unnamed German residents at Andenne for the suggestion that the attack was pre-arranged and that the clergy had from the pulpit given instructions to the people as to its organisation.

The inhabitants used bombs, hand-grenades and machine-guns.—Roleff states that bombs and hand-grenades were thrown at the troops and that machine-guns even had been used (App. B 3). The value of his evidence as to this receives some light from the fact that a German soldier who was wounded in the leg by a grenade bullet also declared that he had been struck by a Belgian grenade. The German surgeon who attended to him afterwards acknowledged, when one of his colleagues mentioned the fact, that on the contrary it was one from a German grenade, in every respect identical with one which a German aeroplane (Taube) had dropped in the neighbourhood shortly before. (See M. Montjoie's Report at p. 134). The story is therefore a flight of imagination based on preconceived ideas.

These preconceived ideas are the more dangerous because they even influenced the officers, whose judgment went astray through fear of *francs-tireurs*. The following circumstance shews what grounds there are for this statement: On the afternoon of the 19th August, quite near Andenne, a corporal of Uhlans was wounded on the Namur road. He was taken to the hospital, where he at once received most careful attention. Shortly after he was brought in one of his officers came to see him and wanted him to say that he was wounded by a *franc-tireur*. "No," replied the Uhlan, "a Belgian soldier wounded me. He was a good shot." The attack on the Uhlan, and others like it, must have been known to the troops who passed through Andenne on the 20th August under General von Langermann's command. They were certainly represented as the work of *francs-tireurs*, for Roleff states (App. B 3) that the soldiers had been warned and were ready to repel an attack. It can thus be understood how, for the moment, it may have occurred to the mind of General von Langermann that there had been an attack by *francs-tireurs*, but one cannot so easily understand the lack of *sangfroid* and judgment of this superior officer. Does he not go to the length of writing that not only men, but also—according to reports made to him—women, were firing at his troops?

Moreover Roleff pretends that the civilians were firing machine-guns because, when he was wounded, he distinctly *heard* the characteristic sound of these weapons. But he never *saw* them being worked by civilians. There is nothing surprising in the fact that he could hear the noise, since it has been proved that the Germans used these terrible weapons to fire at the people and the houses. His evidence collapses when we consider that, if machine-guns had been concealed in the dwellings, they would have been found among the ruins, and the Germans would not have failed to utilise such discoveries. As to the charge made by Roleff, who, being wounded, may have been somewhat delirious, that the inhabitants made use of bombs and hand-grenades, its absurdity is proved beyond all possible doubt by the fact that even the Belgian forces in the field did not possess such weapons until 1915. How could they have been in the possession of civilians in 1914?

It is, moreover, false that the shutters of the houses were lowered when the bells rang (p. 107). It is possible that some inhabitants took this precaution when they heard the firing, but there is nothing astonishing or suspicious in such an act of prudence.

It is also false that the butchery took place on the 20th in the course of the searches for men who had been shooting, made by the soldiers in the houses. There were very few victims that evening or the following night. It was on the 21st August alone that the great majority of the 200 inhabitants murdered at Andenne, of whom the German Military Commission of Inquiry speaks (p. 107), were shot with rifles or machine-guns.

Once "repression" was begun, violence, cruelty and pillage passed all limits. The rooted notion in the mind of the German soldier that a town where civilians fire at him is his property has probably a great deal to do with the abominable deeds of violence committed at Andenne.

Sub-Lieutenant Götze's Inquiry.—As to the report of Sub-Lieutenant Götze, who on the 5th January, 1915, went to Andenne at the order of the military governor of Namur to hold an inquiry, it is a veritable "Declaration of Insolvency."

Most of the residents examined replied that they knew nothing about the occurrences. They certainly cannot be blamed for this. In a unilateral inquiry it

would have been imprudent to complain to one German officer of acts of violence committed under the orders of other German officers.

An inquiry held under such conditions is entirely valueless.

It may be noticed that the witnesses did not *deny* the facts charged against the German troops by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry; they contented themselves with saying that they hid in their cellars and that they knew nothing about such incidents, or only knew of them by hearsay.

It is, however, interesting to note three things in the depositions of the Götze inquiry. The first is that a witness, Florent Debrun, states that about 7 o'clock in the evening of the 20th August he was in his garden when an aeroplane appeared very high up, that the German troops at once began to fire at it, and then suddenly they opened fire in all parts of the town.

It is probable, having regard to the nervousness of the German troops and their obsession concerning *francs-tireurs*, that this firing may have given the soldiers in the town the impression that they were being attacked, and that they accordingly used their arms against the supposed assailants. It is even possible that the bursting of shrapnel or the sound of the shots fired at the aeroplane may have produced such an effect on their terrified minds. Had not the soldiers before they entered Andenne been warned to be prudent, and be ready for an attack by the inhabitants?

The second point is that according to M. Cartiaux, the priest, the German authorities in September, 1914, held an inquiry, and that three suspected persons were arrested. There is not a word in the "White Book" about the result of this inquiry. The reason is explained by this very silence.

The third point that deserves attention is a statement by Georges Belin, a schoolmaster, according to whom there was an opinion at Andenne that a Belgian soldier of the 8th Line Regiment, in civilian clothes, had fired at the German troops. Another soldier, also in mufti, was with him. (The text does not state if he also fired.) The deposition of Belin is not given in *oratio recta*,* and, moreover, he seems to have made the statement attributed to him under extreme pressure from the German investigator (*auf eindringlichen Vorhalt*). According to the witness they were deserters. Can it be reasonably supposed that men who fled like cowards from the ranks would have fired on their own account when in civilian clothes, which would have exposed them to much greater risk, instead of securing the safety they were seeking by mixing with the people where no one would have noticed them, as Belgium is a country where military service is restricted? And even if this deserter—or two deserters—in fact did fire at the German troops, would this act give the German army the right to murder 200 innocent inhabitants, including the venerable Burgomaster?

The inquiry of Götze did not even, it seems, deal with the events as a whole nor with their cause. The examination was directed to points of minor importance, as was pointed out above (see p. 68 of this volume). Set up to collect proofs of the *pretended* atrocities at Andenne, the Götze inquiry was a farce.

The documents relating to the massacre at Andenne, published in the "White Book," do not prove that the German troops in the city were the victims of treacherous assaults from the inhabitants. The conduct of these troops and their officers is all the more abominable seeing that even if there were such assaults they had scarcely any result. "By a miracle," writes General von Langermann, "our losses were small (*gering*). The *francs-tireurs* aimed very badly" (App. B 1). The Report of the Military Commission of Inquiry recognises (p. 107) that 200 inhabitants were killed—in the course of the fighting in the houses.† Admitting—as a supposition—that repression was justifiable, who can defend what was done at Andenne? These proceedings, however, appear to be in perfect conformity with the principles laid down in "Kriegsbrauch in Landkriege."‡

* According to Mgr. Heylen's note of the 31st October, 1915, the schoolmaster to whom Götze refers has protested against some at least of the statements attributed to him. (See p. 337 of the present volume.)

† In fact, the great majority of the inhabitants of Andenne were not killed in the houses. There was no fighting either in the streets or houses of Andenne. (See also p. 336 of the present volume.)

‡ The Proclamation reproduced at the end of note on p. 129 fully confirms this appreciation.

SECTION III.

BELGIAN DOCUMENTS AND WITNESSES.*

1. *Report by M. Montjoie, Advocate, of Andenne.*

Andenne, a small town between Namur and Huy, suffered very grievously from the German invasion. Out of a population of about 8,000, 250 to 300 men were shot by drunken savages for no reason whatever.

About 8.30 on the morning of the 19th August the 8th Line Regiment, before retiring, blew up the bridge over the Meuse. Barely an hour had elapsed when the Prussian advance guard arrived. The cavalry went straight to the bridge, and seemed to be greatly disconcerted at seeing their advance obstructed. Soon afterwards they went up towards Le Condroz. They had come straight from Elsenborn by Stavelot, Louveigné and Ohey. The infantry remained in the town and seized the various public moneys, destroyed the post office telephones, and took possession of the correspondence. In the afternoon there came uninterrupted columns of troops, both by the Le Condroz and by the Liège roads. It was a formidable swarm of spiked helmets. The soldiers spread through the town and indulged in copious potations. I then saw the smoke of a fire in the direction of Couthuin, and a house in flames on the Ciney road. But in the town everything was comparatively quiet. They billeted on me a captain and a lieutenant of pioneers, whose first task was to restore the bridge.

The first night and the day of the 20th were calm. The troops were marching through in unending columns. About 6 p.m. I heard a sudden vigorous firing from the Seilles bank, and almost at once the whole district between the Meuse and the station was in flames. It was like a vision of hell. I believe I saw, in the light of the flames, soldiers pushing back with their bayonets people who were trying to escape from their burning houses. The firing was answered from the Andenne bank. To the whistling of the rifle shots were added the rattle of the machine-guns and the muffled explosions of grenades. A machine-gun was put in a shop in the main street, and thence the Germans fired at the houses opposite. I am told that a bullet passed through Delhaize's shop and fell in a neighbouring café. We passed the night in cellars. About 5 a.m. the firing ceased and we heard the sound of doors and windows being hacked and burst open. From time to time there were sharp volleys. No mistake was possible. It was the end. Civilians were being shot dead in their houses and gardens.

About 6 o'clock a body of about ten men broke into my garden. I shewed myself. The soldiers aimed at me and made me hold up my hands. After I and the other people at my house had been searched we were taken, still holding up our hands, to Bertrand's factory, near Guilette's pharmacy. I nearly tripped over a body lying on the pavement. I recognised that it was the Burgomaster, M. Camus.

At this moment a long artillery convoy was passing. The artillerymen looked at us and jeered and pointed at us. "Vous fousillé, fousillé vous" ("You shot"). The captain billeted with me came out of the Kommandantur as we arrived. He stopped us, went and spoke to the officers, and then, without a word, took us to the bottom of the garden. At this moment I suddenly heard a click of weapons behind me. I turned sharply and saw six Jägers in a line fixing bayonets. I asked the officer, "Are we going to be shot?" "No. You are free," he replied.

When I got home I saw one of the rearmost artillerymen of the convoy, urged on by his comrades, aiming very carefully in the direction of Liège. I also looked in that direction and saw that his mark was a little girl of about 12, who had run away and was for the moment standing still at the intersection of two roads. I shouted, "No, no! Don't do that." He looked at me furiously, but at last lowered his weapon.

It was a touching sight to see all the old men, women and children forced to march towards the Place des Tilleuls, where the inhabitants were being collected. A paralytic was brought on a wheeled chair, and others were carried there. The women and children were parted from the men. There was some talk of turning a machine-gun on the latter in a body, and then of killing several at a time by placing them one behind the other in three ranks. At last three were selected and executed by the houses in the Square in the sight of everybody. The men were divided into groups, and some were taken towards the Meuse to be shot, and the others kept as hostages. The first day the latter were kept without food. Afterwards they were supplied by the people. Captain Scheunemann turned to the women and said to them, slowly and in a cynical manner: "Mesdames, go home. Go and bury your dead." This man had passed ten years in the Cameroons.

The captain returned to my house about 8 o'clock. I asked him to get certain hostages released. He said that would not be easy, as he had very little authority, and that he would speak about it again at midday. It was impossible, in spite of all I could do, to obtain more.

* The evidence published in the Appendix to the Report of the British Commission of Inquiry into the German atrocities, under the chairmanship of Lord Bryce, will also be read with interest.

The time seemed frightfully long, for every moment one heard explosions. At last, at mid-day, he consented to go and see where the hostages were. By the wall of Godin's paper mill there were 30 or 40 bodies lying side by side and unrecognisable. Most had been hit in the head, which was sometimes half blown off. It was horrible. There were other groups who had been shot in other places. The captain said: "I don't like this. It isn't war." We set out to find the living; everywhere on all the pavements were corpses and pools of blood. Through the windows and doors the soldiers could be seen drinking, singing, playing the piano or gramophone, and plundering. Moreover, regiments were marching through with their fifes playing, helmets, horses and carts decorated with leaves: what a shocking festival in a city of mourning!

About 5 o'clock two hostages obtained leave to say good-bye to their families before setting out for Germany, where there was talk of sending them. The pass given to them only allowed them to be absent for one hour. The soldiers, on the other hand, said that they need only come back at 7 o'clock. I went with the hostages to the guardroom to learn which was correct. The officer, whom I was lodging, altered the passes to 7 o'clock, but I was kept in sight to secure the return of the two hostages. At 7 o'clock I had the satisfaction of obtaining the release of my two friends.

It was not until next day that we learned the number of victims.

MM. Gillet and Dozin, who had taken refuge with their father-in-law, were killed at close quarters in the garden. One of them had hardly time to say: "We could not have fired. We had no arms."

M. K—, an old man who had lost the power of speech through a stroke, was killed in his garden while his wife and daughter were being thrust into the street. There were seven killed in the D.—family. In one cellar a dozen corpses of relatives and friends were found. A contractor and his son were killed in a cistern which they had dug in their cellar. G—, the chemist, and his son and his brother, were killed in their cellar. A plasterer was killed in his house, and I have been told that his body was tossed into the burning house. One or two women were shot dead.

About 25 inhabitants of Seilles were also shot. I have been told that inhabitants were hanged at the slaughter house after being cruelly tortured, but I don't know if that is true.

All this on the usual false pretext that there had been firing. It is soon said, and imagination does much. This is shewn by the fact that on a subsequent day, when I was at the Town Hall, the Commandant came and said: "Another shot was fired yesterday evening. It must have been a revolver, and I can tell approximately the house whence it was fired." On investigation it was a revolver cartridge which had been lost in a pile of rags that were set on fire. The soldiers found it to their advantage to say that they were fired at. In such cases orgies and looting were permitted, and, moreover, it afforded them an excellent opportunity to pay their officers out for their brutality.

The looting was organised. The soldiers stole wine, linen, clothing, cigars, jewellery—in short, everything they liked. The more expensive furniture was sent to Germany, and the house was generally emptied before it was set on fire.

Another story. On the evening of the 20th, Dr. L.— was called to the bedside of a sick woman. The firing began, and he took refuge in the cellar with his patient. Towards morning, during a lull, he ventured out. He met a German officer and shewed him his medical pass, issued by the Belgian communal authorities. The officer examined it and said, "Ah! You too have a pass from that — of a mayor. Your case is clear." His wrists were bound so tightly that the marks were visible on them for days, and he was taken towards the Meuse to be shot. Happily a German doctor happened to be there whom he had assisted in attending to the German wounded at the hospital, and who secured his release. Dr. L.— afterwards attended a German soldier who had been wounded in the leg by a grenade bullet. The surgeon at once affirmed that it was a Belgian grenade thrown by the people. Dr. L.— happened at the time to have in his pocket some bullets of a German grenade that had been thrown from a Taube on some clay sheds, which the aviator had mistaken for a camp. These bullets and that extracted from the soldier's leg were identical. It was again a German doctor who had to be called to save the School of the Brethren from fire and slaughter. This building was flying the Red Cross flag and German wounded were being tended in it. The soldiers declared that their comrades had been fired at from inside it. Several proclamations were published. One signed by Scheunemann, the Commandant, was to the effect that Andenne was a den of brigands and assassins. According to another, at the first shot all the inhabitants would be hanged and the town set on fire and rased to the ground. Yet these gentlemen amused themselves by constantly firing off our sporting guns, which we had deposited at the communal school before they arrived.

2. *Report of M. D., Merchant, of Andenne.*

The first Uhlans arrived about 10.30 on the morning of Wednesday, the 19th August. There were about 30 of them. The main body, about 4,000 or 5,000 men, mostly of the 28th Pioneer Regiment, entered the town about 3 o'clock from the direction of Ohey.

They arrived singing and marching their parade step, sending everybody indoors and threatening to kill anyone who remained in the streets or who watched them pass from the windows.

They made eight persons go on to the part of the bridge on the Andenne side that remained intact, and made them lie down with their heads towards the broken part and remained about half an hour behind them, aiming at them and threatening them with death if the Belgian soldiers fired at the Germans from the other bank of the Meuse.

The evening passed in comparative quiet, no one daring to go out

Next day, Thursday, all the shops were pillaged. Jewellery, groceries, meat, bread, cigars, and especially liquor, were stolen. There were continual threats to shoot people for trifles and also especially if they were found in possession of arms or ammunition. Fortunately, the Burgomaster had had all such things deposited at the communal school by the 14th August, as the following receipt proves, and no townsman had any in his possession.

"No.

Received in deposit from M. D.—

2 boxes of ammunition.

1 rifle.

1 carbine.

Andenne. 14/8/1914.

DR. J. CAMUS,

Burgomaster."

In the evening the German soldiers, most of whom were drunk, quarrelled with one another and fired rifles and revolvers. About 20 of them were killed or seriously wounded.

The pretext was now found: civilians had been shooting at the soldiers, so next day the inhabitants were expelled from their houses and taken to the Place des Tilleuls.

The men who did not understand or who from fear hid in cellars and yards were killed with axes, revolvers and bayonets. Those who tried to run away were shot in the street, some even by machine-guns.

Civilians who were only wounded, whether in the streets or elsewhere, were killed without mercy.

In the Square the people were kept for three or four hours with their hands in the air, while the officers were discussing the method of killing them. Some thought the crowd should be fired into. When the discussion was concluded some of the men were taken ten by ten near the town slaughter-house and there shot. Those whom chance had spared were taken as hostages and shut up in some houses for 48 hours without anything to eat or drink.

In the meantime the Germans had taken about ten persons to dig a large hole by the side of the Meuse near the slaughter-house and forced them to bury at least 15 of their fellow townsmen in it. The Burgomaster was wounded in the street and finished off in a pharmacy to which he had been taken. Several women and children were also killed in the street.

Each family with dead people in the house had to put them on the pavement, where they were loaded on to tumbrils and taken either to the general grave or to the cemetery.

During and after these massacres the German soldiers kept on singing and playing in some of the houses.

After 48 hours' captivity the oldest of the men taken as hostages were liberated and next day the others were released on parole.

The station of Andenne and about 100 houses were set on fire, and several others damaged by machine-gun fire.

Before the principal houses were set alight the best of the furniture, antiques, &c., were loaded on to wagons (as well as the more valuable weapons among those at the school) and taken to Germany.

Many young girls and women were raped, and I am told that in a village of Andenne a farmer's wife was violated by five or six men one after the other, in the presence of her husband, whom they had tied up.

In another house where the husband was killed, his wife was forced to wait on the German soldiers, and to step over her husband's body several times.

3. *Deposition of M. X., an Official at Andenne.*

About 8 in the morning on the 19th August, before retiring to the fortress of Namur, the Belgian engineers blew up the fine bridge at Andenne to impede the German troops crossing the Meuse. The explosion was shortly before the Germans entered. The first of the cavalry came on the Ciney road and fell back on the main body of the force, which was arriving from Germany by this and other roads leading to Andenne. As they left they stopped at the Town Hall and took M. Camus, the Burgomaster, before the Staff. M. Camus was questioned about the positions of the Belgian troops, and about the people of Andenne, his intentions, &c. He stated that the people had surrendered all their arms, which was true, and that he had published notices calling upon them to remain quiet and to respect the invading troops.

He assured the commanding officer that the townsfolk were peaceably inclined.

After this interview he was taken under an armed escort to the town treasurer's office. An officer demanded the immediate handing over of the town safe, which contained about 3,000 francs. He objected that this amount was not proportionate to the size of the town, called for the account books, and announced his intention of returning.

In the afternoon a body of cavalry reconnoitred in the direction of Namur, where the rear-guard of our 8th of the Line was in retreat. As they were retiring they fired at the cavalry, and one of them came back severely wounded in the arm.

On the morning of the 20th August requisitioning began, and the demands of the invaders became extortionate. Fresh troops kept on arriving, and soon the town was full of soldiers demanding wine, spirits, champagne, tobacco, coffee, &c. Some paid in notes redeemable by France, others, after being served, left the houses without making any explanation. This was the beginning of systematic pillage, for which the officers gave the example. The people, terrified by the threats of death, remained indoors, and in the streets there was nothing to be seen but grey uniforms. In the meantime the Germans had built a bridge of boats above the one which had been blown up, and in the afternoon the troops began to cross from the right to the left bank. The building of this bridge had taken *twenty-four hours*.

Between 4 and 5 o'clock I went along the principal streets. The cafés were full to overflowing. A great number of the soldiers were quite drunk. At L.—Café I noticed one of them make the motion of firing at a passing officer.

About 6.15 heavy firing began. Everybody thought it was an attack by the Belgian forces, and took refuge in the cellars. The sky was soon lit up by burning houses.

Germans were then seen to be firing at one another across the Meuse. After three-quarters of an hour of this terrible fusillade the "Cease fire" was sounded and the fighting ceased.

From my position I could clearly see the soldiers huddled under the houses—the middle of the street being quite empty—to escape as far as possible from the bullets coming from the troops on the other side of the Meuse.

About 8 o'clock the firing began again in full force.

This time it was directed against the houses amidst frightful shouts and howls.

The firing lasted all night, and became terrible between midnight and one in the morning. Machine and field guns were used. Volleys were fired at windows and the lights of the cellars. The soldiers were heard shouting in the streets, breaking the shop windows and taking what was left in them. About 4 o'clock a body of cavalry shouted out: "People of Andenne, come out. The French cavalry has come to help you." The few poor creatures who believed this were shot, but very few were deceived.

At daybreak on the 21st August the soldiers entered the houses, breaking open doors and windows, and forced the people out by threats of violence, saying, "Commandant's orders. Everybody is to go to the Grand' Place." This was in the outlying streets, for in the central streets the men were shot at close range before their wives and families. The inhabitants, thus collected, were obliged to hold up their hands, and all, without exception, men, women, children and old men, sick or well, were taken to the Place des Tilleuls, the women being placed opposite to the men. While passing through the streets the poor creatures saw the bodies of their fellow townsfolk lying face downwards in all directions.

When the Germans had thus assembled the people of Andenne, about 850 being men, a German colonel sent the women home, saying, "Go and clean your houses and bury your dead." Most of them took good care not to go indoors, fortunately, for more than one who did had to undergo unspeakable outrages. It was then about 9.30 a.m. The colonel announced that there were numerous *francs-tireurs* in Andenne, and in consequence he had to punish the town and make an example of it. He made three men step out of the ranks and stand by a house and these were shot on the spot. Officers and men examined the others. Those who had black hands, including a cobbler, whose fingers were blackened by cobbler's wax, and those who had scratches, were placed on one side. About 40 were thus collected, put up against a wall and shot. These proceedings were accompanied by blows from rifles and fists, and vile insults, in which a colonel and a captain distinguished themselves by their ferocity. The rest of the men were kept as hostages and imprisoned in some houses, where the German orgy had been given free rein for 24 hours. For two days and nights they were kept there while the German forces gave themselves up to every excess—looting, burning, outraging defenceless women, and destroying furniture. To crown their misdeeds they published on the walls of Andenne a notice that they had known for a long time that Andenne was a nest of bandits.

A summary investigation established that about 250 people of Andenne were murdered; some were killed with axes and frightfully mutilated, among others Joseph Walgraffe, Léon Genicot and J. Ancelin. An absolutely trustworthy informant certifies that the head of the last-named was struck off and his body placed in the gutter as a stepping stone for the soldiers, who were getting drunk in his café. M. Walgraffe was trying to escape through a ventilator of his burning house, but was thrust back into the fire by axes.

Many other atrocities have been related to me, but I do not know enough about my informants to mention them here, and I therefore say nothing about them.

About 100 of the people of Andenne (not including here the people of Seilles, opposite Andenne), were kept as prisoners until the end of September.

The pen is powerless to describe the spectacle that the town displayed after the Germans had passed through. Murder and pillage went on until the 23rd August. The town was incumbered by *débris* of every kind. All the cellars had been emptied and the bottles broken or left about in the streets and houses. About 30 houses were burnt down.

It is unnecessary to say that at Andenne, as in so many other places, not a single shot was fired by civilians. They had all been disarmed before the Germans came. An inquiry would not only prove this, but also establish that these atrocities were planned beforehand. Soldiers were seen to go into S.'s house, and descend into the cellars, fire into the air through the ventilators and then return to the street calling out that there were *francs-tireurs* in that house.

Numerous witnesses prove positively that the sack and massacre at Andenne were premeditated. Several German officers and men had foretold it both in the neighbouring villages and in the town itself.

One officer told Mme. S.—, on whom he was billeted, not to go to Andenne, where terrible things were to occur. (Mme. S.'s house is about 6 kilometres from Andenne.)

Another officer, before he died at the hospital at Huy, told a trustworthy individual (whose name I will communicate) that not a tenth of what the General Staff had designed and planned had occurred at Andenne.

A child a few months old was killed in his mother's arms. Five women were killed, one about 14 or 15 years old, after being violated, it is said, by 17 soldiers.

Numerous rapes are talked about, but the unfortunate victims naturally keep silence.

The truth as to this will never be known, nor can I relate all that I have been told about it.

The looting was methodically carried out. Groups of soldiers under the orders of officers broke and destroyed doors and windows.

Other groups, also under the orders of officers, carried off all movables and merchandise of every description, which were at once taken away.

Looting went on in the more important streets to the exclusion of the working class districts.

4. *Deposition of M. X.:—Magistrate.*

I went to Andenne on the 27th May to spend my leave with my parents-in-law, M. and Mme. X., manufacturers, of Andenne.

The town was at first occupied by detachments of lancers and infantry and the artillery of the Civic Guard of Tournai.

These troops displayed much activity and encountered patrols of the advance guard of Uhlans, killing some and taking others prisoners.

On Wednesday, the 19th August, the town was evacuated by the Belgian troops, who blew up the bridge between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning, and the 8th Line Regiment retired along the railway towards Namur. A detachment was unable to cross the bridge and remained behind. It retired along the other bank to Maizeret Fort. The men of this detachment while on the way fired at some Uhlans some distance from the town and hit some men and horses. At this time some Uhlans had already entered the town, and I saw a wounded man and a wounded horse brought back.

I saw the detachment of Uhlans who entered the town about 10 a.m. go by. They went as far as the bridge, which had been destroyed, and then to the Town Hall, while some went to the hospital. I went home, and shortly afterwards some German pontoon hands came to the house to ask for iron casks to act as floaters for a bridge that was to be thrown across the river. We were forced to supply about 20 casks without any receipts. My father-in-law marked them and helped to load them on his own cart.

They then asked for coffee. My mother-in-law supplied them. They were also allowed to wash their hands, &c.

In the evening sentries were posted in the streets. The night was quiet. Opposite to us the Germans had, also without giving receipts, taken about 10,000 francs worth of wood.

Next day, the bridge being ready, the troops began to cross by thousands.

About 4 o'clock I went to M. Vivier, the hairdresser's. While I was there two men of a Uhlans squadron halted in front of the door and came in. One put his flask on the table and asked for it to be filled with gin. The other did the same. The hairdresser complied. The two soldiers appeared to be greatly excited. I departed and went towards the Place des Tilleuls, near M. Philippart's house. Foot soldiers were halted there. The men made signs that they wanted drink. They were asked whether they would have coffee or beer, and replied, "Chocolate and red wine."

I went to the Four Corners, where the main road from Namur to Liège crosses the chief street, which leads to the bridge. I sat on the window-sill of M. Dandois' provision shop. My father-in-law was on the edge of the pavement watching the soldiers pass. A superior officer came up, with a revolver in his hand, and as M. Couderchet, not seeing him, did not give way, he apostrophised him, putting his revolver to his breast. We remained there watching the troops going along the way to the tow-path, a narrow alley, by Pastur and Bertrand's factory, on their way to the bridge of boats. At a particular moment there was a kind of movement. An order seemed to pass along the ranks, and the soldiers put their rifles under their arms. Not a single shot had then been heard. Nine or ten minutes later I heard several shots from the other side of the Meuse.

Soon there came a series of shots, still from the other bank, but the soldiers by us began to fire at Seilles. We fled along the houses under a hail of bullets, and took refuge in the cellars of my brother-in-law's house. The bullets hit the bars of the fences opposite. It seemed to us that they came from the heights of Seilles.

At this time we believed that regular fighting was going on. There was a veritable panic among the troops at Andenne. I heard the ringing of bells and the shouts of officers rallying their men. Soldiers hid themselves in M. Terrasse's stables by his house. We heard carts hurrying back towards Hautebise, in the direction from which they had come. Sometimes the firing ceased for awhile. All this took some time. During a pause we were able to return to my parents-in-law through the garden. My father-in-law came in later. He told us that he had been held up at Vivier's, the hairdresser's, whose house had been riddled with bullets.

We went into the factory cellar. We saw the flames of burning houses in all directions. The night fell. We prepared a hasty meal. The night was calm, though there was firing at intervals.

About 3.30 a.m. my brother-in-law went out as far as the main road and returned, saying, "It's all over. The soldiers are asleep on their carts." He went to take two or three chairs belonging to him.

An hour afterwards we heard a noise. My brother-in-law went outside with his father. He saw the soldiers breaking doors and windows. The soldiers caught sight of him, and seized and took him away. My father-in-law came back and shut the door. He came to tell us what had happened. As we heard loud knocking my other brother-in-law said to his father, "We must open the door to the soldiers." My father-in-law went out, closed the cellar flap and rolled a large cask of gin on top of it. He then went to open the door of the dwelling-house.

Shortly afterwards we heard my father-in-law come back, followed by soldiers. He came into the yard, and we heard him go towards the main door of the factory. I don't know what happened. We heard, "Oh! Oh!" and three detonations. At the first I rushed to the stair. My wife clung to me, imploring me not to speak. I held my peace and at that moment my little boy began to cry bitterly. I was on the stair, and through an opening in the flap I could see the soldiers. One was opposite me, crouching down with his rifle at his shoulder. He was a fusilier, probably of the Reserve Guards. The soldiers went away, and we at once heard the sound of breaking crockery and window panes. The house was ransacked.

We no longer heard anything in the house. About 10 o'clock we were able to go out, and I found my father-in-law on the ground inside the house, about a yard from the main door. Part of his head was blown off. He was 65 years old. I put a rug over him and we all went out. Everywhere we heard women wailing. We went by the garden to the main road. We saw three bodies in the garden next door, M. Crossard, his son-in-law, and M. Terrasse. We saw a soldier on the steps of the house opposite, and we returned to go to our own door. Women warned us to hide, as all the men were being killed. My brother-in-law and I hid in an outhouse. I heard a noise as if someone were being brought along. My wife told me afterwards that it was a little boy, 14 years old, who had dragged himself towards us, his body pierced by bullets. It was little Damoiseau. He was put on a table in our house. They wanted to fetch a priest and a doctor, but the soldiers posted outside prevented the women from going out. The child died.

Other women came, crying out that they were setting the town on fire. Overcome with terror, my wife and mother-in-law with our little boy took refuge with an aunt at Ben-Ahin, six kilometres away. On the way they saw corpses everywhere, in particular the Davin family in a field. We remained in hiding until Sunday, almost without food or water. The soldiers came several times to continue their robbery. They broke open the doors of the warehouses, but took nothing. They came to take the horses, but did not succeed, as the horses were restive. They took a cart, which we afterwards found in the open fields.

On Saturday my father and my brother-in-law, who were hostages, came to the house and gave us an account of the massacres at the Place des Tilleuls and by the Meuse. On Sunday my brother-in-law came to fetch me, and we went to ask for a pass at the Kommandatur, which had been established at the house of M. Dubois, the manager of Pastur and Bertrand's factory. On the way I noticed more than one shop window without a pane of glass left whole, and the street was full of goods and *débris*. (On the Friday when the men were taken prisoners there was a Belgian flag on the ground and the soldiers ostentatiously trampled on it.) We got a pass to go into the streets and profited by it to go to our aunt's at Ben-Ahin.

On the Friday, after my brother-in-law had gone and my father-in-law was murdered, I heard volleys and realised that massacres were taking place.

On Sunday I was able to go into the house and note the damage and thefts. This is what I noted. All the glass of the mirrors was broken or pierced by bullets, the glass of the front door, the large glass over the dining-room chimney-piece, an alabaster clock, the gas fittings, the piano—everything was broken. A mahogany *escritoire* in the drawing room was broken and forced, and jewellery had been taken. The fireplace, the mirror and the ornaments in the drawing room were broken, and generally everything within reach was smashed. The linen was taken, the curtains pulled down, and everything of value removed.

Several weeks later we returned to Andenne. A strong force of the Landsturm was quartered there for two or three days. They sacked M. Brosse's house and stole things from Mme. Carelle, whose husband, an old man, had been killed. They stole Mme. Bacu's wine.

About 6 o'clock one Sunday evening, as the tram came along, a soldier attempted violence to a lady who lives next door to us, and who was on her doorstep with her little boy.

One day, towards the end of August, I was at Give when the Germans set M. Duisberg's house on fire on the pretext that he was a Frenchman. At Ben-Ahin one day the soldiers

fired near the Co-operative Stores, pretending that the people living there had sheltered Belgians.

I know in London some of the witnesses of the murders at Andenne, in particular M. Adolphe Diet, his wife and daughter.

5. *Deposition of M. Théophile Davin, of Andenne.*

On the 20th August, 1914, I was with my father and other workmen in the foundry belonging to my father, a manufacturer and sheriff of the town. The Belgian soldiers had blown up the bridge over the Meuse and we went to see it. At this moment seven German soldiers came up. They shouted after us and we re-entered the house at the side through the works. In the evening a great number of Germans arrived and collected all the men to fill up the trenches dug by the Belgian soldiers. I hid myself, but one of my cousins and his father were taken. They were able to come back about 8 p.m. My father fled into the house. My aunt and grandmother and all our relations came to take refuge in our house, and we passed the night in the cellar.

At that time I went to the attics, whence I saw the flames of burning houses. About 5 a.m. the Germans began to smash in the doors of the houses near by. We had opened ours. But one of my cousins had wished to return to his house and, having been seen by the Germans, had come back and shut our door.

As the Germans were outside I went up with two of my cousins and another boy. The Germans put aside another of my cousins and a small boy, saying, "Too young." Then they made us hold our hands up, and led us to the next field, shouting at and insulting us. There were four of us. We had to jump over the wires of the fence. There were several corpses there and also some wounded, one of whom, Louis Latine, was calling out, "Mamma, Mamma." We had hardly got into the field before one of my cousins fell, then the other and the third boy, all shot. I also fell and pretended to be dead. Other men were also brought there, including my father, who were killed in the same way. One man had his head smashed in with an axe. A wounded man was also finished off with an axe. Another man who was brought there was killed in the same way. A man named Barsy, brother-in-law to Emile Losson, had his wrist chopped with an axe and was finished off in the middle of the field by a revolver shot.

There were about 80 Germans in the road by the field, but only four were shooting. Two officers were in command. Two soldiers were armed with axes. The number on their shoulders was "83."

When I thought it was all over I raised my head, but at once a number of bullets were fired at me. Two or three soldiers came into the field, but no one came near me. I then waited until 7.30 a.m. I rose, but got down at once, as two Germans were passing. I was then able to escape, and went and hid in a phenic acid barrel in Eugène Losson's fire-proof goods factory. I remained there for an hour. Hearing my mother weeping I came out. She was imploring the Germans, who laughed at her.

The same day we went to Give, but as the Germans were also collecting the men there, several of us went and hid in a coal-pit.

In the field at Andenne, 17 were killed and one man was wounded. He died two hours after. I alone escaped.

6. *Report of Abbé Bobon, Professor of St. Joseph's College at Virton.*

19th August, 1914. At 8.40 the Belgian Engineers blew up the bridge.

In the afternoon a corporal of Uhlans was wounded on the Namur road. He was taken to the hospital, where he was visited by his officer, who suggested that he had been wounded by a *franc-tireur*. "No," replied the man with emphasis. "I was wounded by a Belgian soldier. He was a good shot."

The Colonel of the Jägers of the Guard took up quarters with his Staff at the Red Cross, where there were several wounded. The leads formed an observation post under the shelter of the Red Cross flag.

The occupation of the town was completed.

20th August, 1914. Construction of a wooden bridge and passage of the troops, especially in the afternoon. The crowd silently watched them march past. About 6.15 p.m. the first shots seemed to come from Seilles, and to be answered from Andenne. The town was entered on all sides by troops firing in all directions. The Rue Bertrand, the Namur road and the district round the station were the prey of flames. Everyone took refuge in their cellars.

The men of the hamlet of Hautebise had been taken away in a body in the evening. Some were killed, and so were several women and a nine months' old child. The others were taken to the left bank, with several of the townsfolk who were taken on the way. Some were taken as far as Eghezée and released after some days. The others, 44 in number, were taken, ill-treated and faint with hunger, to the Chartreuse at Liège, where they were detained as prisoners for over a month.

21st August, 1914. At 4 o'clock a.m. the soldiers began to enter the houses, riddling them with bullets before venturing inside. No doubt a risky business, since all weapons had been handed to the communal authorities a fortnight before! Inhabitants were assassinated in their houses, yards and gardens, while the women were shut up or hustled to the Place des Tilleuls. Others were killed in the streets, at the Square, or in groups by the Meuse. As for the reason given for ordering the killing, it was always the same: *Francs-tireurs*. The German inquiries were

never able to prove it. The soldiers had been drinking for 24 hours, and had orders to kill and plunder at the first shot.

Those arrested but not massacred, about 900, were taken to three small houses opposite the remaining arch of the bridge—a splendid living target for the shells of Maizeret and Marchovelette! On this shaking arch they placed unfortunate prisoners opposite to some machine guns, with which they were threatened to increase their terror. The gestures of the soldiers did not need the support of vocal threats. Many of the unfortunate prisoners got ready to jump into the yawning gulf of the Meuse.

At the request of the communal authorities appointed by the Germans, the prisoners were released in groups on various pretexts—the interment of the dead, the cleansing of the streets, &c. About 20 of the principal inhabitants were detained as hostages for a week. Among the prisoners were the Dean of Andenne and two old retired priests, both ill. It is enough to say that one of the prisoners who returned from Liège at the end of September was 80 years old.

The methodical plunder of the shops and houses lasted for several days and nights. Food, drink, linen, wine, cigars, jewellery and furniture, all was systematically stolen or destroyed, and for five weeks the most extortionate requisitions were put upon the poor little town, to such an extent that on the 1st October, Von der Goltz, the Governor-General, forbade any further requisition upon Andenne.

The successive inquiries of the Germans have never proved any attack on the troops by the people of Andenne.

Several months afterwards an officer said: “The tragedy of Andenne is a mystery. It is certain that three people fired at our men, but it can’t be proved they belonged to Andenne.” I conclude from this that the town was pitilessly condemned without serious inquiry, if, indeed, there was any inquiry at all.

Administration of the Town.—The Burgomaster and a sheriff were among the first victims. “The communal authorities and the police have failed in their duty. If I held them I would shoot them all,” shouted the German colonel at the Place des Tilleuls. I do not know what he meant by our duty towards his troops. An inquiry will establish this point of history.

The German authorities nominated a communal council of four members. M. E. de Jaer, the registrar, first condemned to be shot as a *franc-tireur*, in spite of his 70 years, then held as a hostage, was finally nominated as mayor.

Dr. Ch. Ledoyen, who for some time believed that his last hour had come, was nominated deputy mayor.

M. Ch. Lahaye, veterinary surgeon, was named a member of the council, as also was M. Jos. Monrique, a notary (not yet admitted); the latter was made communal secretary an hour after.

These gentlemen and some hospital attendants had passes which they had to shew to the plunderers whom they met in the streets, with bayonets red with the blood of their victims.

This administration, set up in five minutes at the Place des Tilleuls, had to comply with the demands and the exorbitant requisitions of the Prussians. The order was given after the men were interned that the women were to cleanse the streets and bury the dead. (This order was not persisted in.)

The members forced to undertake the administration did everything in their power to satisfy the demands of the Germans and to save the poor prisoners.

Andenne has a working-class population. The administration had at once to feed the starving people. And in proportion to the release of the inhabitants who had been made prisoners, there were thousands to feed at the public expense every day, work having completely ceased in the factories. All these were employed on the public service.

The problem of revictualling the plundered and ruined town was solved by the devotion of these emergency administrators, with the help of all the well disposed men. The Prussians would not listen to any mention of the former council. Its members saw that good could only be done by a prompt response to the appeal of the provisional administration and by assisting them. In November the two councils were united, to the great benefit of the commune.

One word as to the fête at Andenne. The commandant, Becker, who suspected dangerous assemblies when he saw more than three people talking together, and who threatened to destroy the whole town, invited the communal authorities and some people on whom the officers were quartered to be present at a “feu de bivouac” at the Place des Tilleuls. This was a little entertainment, during which the soldiers sang serious songs, and there were speeches with cheers for Andenne. Those invited endured this little military entertainment with resignation.

CHAPTER IV.

SACK AND MASSACRE AT DINANT.*

SECTION I.

STATEMENT OF THE FACTS.

M. Tschoffen, the Public Prosecutor of Dinant, who was in the town when the Germans entered, has in a letter to the Minister of Justice made a detailed report of the occurrence. Arrested on the evening of the 23rd August, with some hundreds of the inhabitants, the magistrate also gives an account of the detention of himself and his companions in the prison of Cassel (Germany). His account, which is based on his own observations and personal investigations, has already been published in the 20th Report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.† With the omission of a few pages it is reprinted below:—

A. Sack and Massacre at Dinant.

M. LE MINISTRE,

I have the honour to forward you the report you requested me to make on the events which occurred in the course of the military operations at and near Dinant, and on the detention in Germany of many of the citizens of Dinant and Anseremme.

On the 6th August, that is to say, before the arrival of the first French troops who came from Givet, German cavalry appeared at Dinant and Anseremme. These patrols sometimes came as far as the houses, and were fired at whenever they came into touch with the Belgian troops, who then held both banks of the Meuse.

I give herewith the sequence of incidents. I detail them merely to shew that the populace absolutely refrained from any attack on the enemy cavalry.

On the 6th August, at Anseremme (Dinant and Anseremme, although two separate communes for local government, are really one town), Belgian Engineers fired at a Hussar patrol and wounded a horse. At Furfooz the dismounted man saw a farmer and took his horse in exchange for the wounded mount.

On the same or the next day three Hussars appeared in the Rue Saint-Jacques (Ciney road). Belgian Carabineers or Chasseurs wounded one and took him prisoner, and also one of his comrades, whose horse had been hit. The third escaped. These men belonged to a Hanoverian regiment.

On the 12th at "Les Rivages" (Dinant) a detachment of the 148th French Infantry destroyed a cavalry patrol. Only one man escaped. About the same date a detachment of the same regiment was in action at "Fonds de Leffe." Two German cavalymen were killed.

On the 15th August the Germans attempted to force the passage of the Meuse at Anseremme, Dinant, and Bouvignes. They were repulsed. During the day several German detachments came into the town. They in no way molested the people.

The town and its inhabitants had little to suffer in the course of this affair, which, however, was very warm and lasted all day. A M. Moussoux was killed while assisting the wounded, and a woman was slightly wounded. On the right bank a French shell fell on a house, and a German shell on the post office. On the left bank several houses were struck by German shells. At the commencement of the action the German artillery fired on the hospital, although it was in full view and flew the Red Cross flag. In a few minutes six projectiles had struck the building. One penetrated the chapel as the children of the orphanage were coming from Mass, but there were no victims.

On the 17th or 18th the French ceased to hold the right bank in force. They merely sent patrols there. Every day there was an exchange of rifle and artillery fire between the two banks. German cavalry again began to come to the town, where they rode about with impunity. For example: about midday on the 19th a Uhlan coming from the direction of Rocher-Bayard returned by the Ciney road without molestation. He had crossed almost the entire length of the town. The same day, at nightfall, another horseman followed the same route and went away in the same safety.

On the night between the 21st and 22nd brisk firing suddenly began in the Rue Saint Jacques (Ciney road). It was some Germans who had come in motors and were firing at houses where the inmates were peacefully sleeping. They burst open the doors, severely wounded three people, one at least with the bayonet, and went away after setting on fire 15 or 20 houses by means of bombs. They left behind a certain number of these, which the inhabitants put into water. They declare that these were incendiary bombs.

* See also Monseigneur Heylen's Note of October 31st, 1915, pp. 337 *et seq.* of present volume.

† M. Tschoffen is further preparing a detailed reply to the assertions contained in the portion of the "White Book" which relates to Dinant.

The people did not understand this attack. The newspapers had indeed published accounts of the atrocities in the neighbourhood of Visé, but no one believed in them. Finally it was currently believed that the aggression was the exploit of some drunken men, and the course of events was awaited without excessive fear.

On the 23rd August the battle between the French and German armies began early with an artillery duel. The first rifle shots were fired by the Germans at two girls, who were looking for a better shelter than the one they had.

All the inhabitants took refuge in their cellars.

* * *

It was by four principal ways that the Germans came to Dinant on the 23rd August, all about the same time, about 6 in the morning.

The roads were : from Lisogne to Dinant ; from Ciney to Dinant ; Mount St. Nicholas, down which came the troops on a part of the Herbuchenne plateau ; and, lastly, the Froidvau road, running from Boisselles to Dinant.

I. The first of these roads enters the district known as " Fonds de Leffe."

On their arrival the soldiers entered the houses, drove out the inmates, killed the men and set the houses on fire.

M. Victor Poncelet was killed in his house before his wife and children. M. Himmer, manager of the factory of Leffe, and vice-consul of the Argentine Republic, was shot, with a number of his workmen. One hundred and fifty-two of the staff of this factory were assassinated.

The church of the Premonstrants was, I am informed, entered while mass was being said.* The men were taken out and shot on the spot. One of the Fathers was also murdered.

Why give more details ? A single fact will be sufficient. Of the whole population of this district there only remain nine men alive (except old men). The women and children were shut up in the Premonstrant Abbey, which was afterwards plundered. Soldiers were seen to walk about the town in the monks' vestments.

II. The same scenes of massacre and arson were witnessed in the Rue St. Jacques, which forms the end of the Ciney road. The victims were, however, not so numerous. The residents in this district, more impressed than the rest of the town by the nocturnal event on the 21st, had mostly left their houses.

From the Rue St. Jacques the Germans spread over the whole district. They continued to murder, but not to the same extent as at Leffe. The people were shut up in the Premonstrant Abbey. Everything was set alight. They burned the tower and the roof of our beautiful ancient Gothic church. They also set fire to the doors, but did not manage to destroy them completely.

Further on, the Grande Place and the Rue Grande as far as the Rue du Tribunal were saved for the moment. The Germans did not go so far. It was only the next day that the inhabitants there were interned.

On the evening of the 24th and on the 25th they set this part of the town on fire. Only one building remains—the Hotel des Familles.

III. From the Rue du Tribunal to the other side of the prison the crimes were the work of the troops coming down the Mount St. Nicholas. I noted the numbers of the 100th and 101st Infantry (Saxons).

On this route, as the troops arrived, they behaved in the same way as at the Rue St. Jacques and Fonds de Leffe. Murder of part of the men. Arrest of the women and children.

As to the remainder of the district, the inhabitants had varying fortune.

Having been collected together and kept for a time in a street, where they were sheltered from the risks of the battle, numerous people (men, women and children) were taken to a place where the road is only built upon on one side, the other side running along the Meuse. The prisoners were lined up in a long row as a shield against the fire of the French, while the Germans passed behind this living rampart. The French ceased fire as soon as they perceived what victims were offered to them. Mlle. Marsigny, aged 20, was, however, killed before her parents' eyes. She received a French bullet in her head. Among the persons thus exposed I mention M. Charlier, my deputy, M. Brichet, inspector of forests, M. Dinmont, the road surveyor, and their wives and children. The captives were exposed thus for two hours and then taken to prison.

The same thing happened to a group of citizens exposed to French fire in the Place de la Prison. They were forced to keep their hands above their heads. Among them was M. Laurent, aged 80, honorary President of the Tribunal, his son-in-law, M. Laurent, the judge, and the latter's wife and children. There were no victims. The French ceased fire and the Germans were able to pass in safety. After two hours the citizens were put into the prison. I mention some names because they are those of magistrates and officials whom I know intimately, but the number of persons subjected to this treatment may be taken as at least 150.

The other inhabitants of the district were, like my family and myself, taken to M. Bouille's house. We were massed in the house, the stable and the forge, and even overflowed into the street.

The people put in the forge, among whom I was, were, as I have said, taken away about 2 o'clock and put in the prison.

About 6 o'clock the others were taken in front of my house, not far from the prison.

* Several people told me this. I left Dinant without hearing the account of the Premonstrant Fathers.

There the able-bodied men were taken out and lined up against the wall of my garden in four ranks. An officer addressed them in German, and then in the presence of the women and children gave the order to fire. They all fell. Soldiers who were looking on from the top of the terrace which is formed by the garden of M. Tranquinet, the architect, burst into shouts of laughter. Surrounded by the flames which were devouring almost the whole district, those whose age or sex had saved them from massacre were set at liberty.

I believe that the exact number of victims killed there was 129.

The volley which struck them down was the one that we heard when we were lined up in the prison yard to be led to death. Thank God we were late. One hundred and twenty-nine men, I repeat, were murdered at this place. The number of those condemned was greater. Several dropped down when the order to fire was given, and others were only slightly wounded. They succeeded in escaping during the night. All those whose corpses were removed had not been killed on the spot. Some of those who escaped told me that at the beginning of the night they heard M. Wasseige, the banker, say to a wounded man: "Don't move or say a word." A passing soldier at once finished him off.

It was not till Wednesday that anyone could attend to these victims, as no one was allowed out before. On the Monday and Tuesday wounded were heard to cry out and groan. They died from lack of care.

IV. The troops who came by the Froidvau road occupied the "Penant" district. The inhabitants were arrested on the arrival of the Germans, and kept under observation near Rocher-Bayard. The fire of the French having slackened, the Germans began to build a bridge. But a few bullets still annoyed them. As they were not very numerous the Germans came to the conclusion—honestly or otherwise—that they were fired by *francs-tireurs*. They sent M. Bourdon, the assistant registrar of the Tribunal, over to the left bank to announce that if the firing continued the inhabitants who were prisoners would be executed. He carried out his mission, and then recrossed the Meuse and surrendered, informing the German officers that he had been able to satisfy himself that French soldiers alone were firing. A few French bullets still came, and then a monstrous thing occurred, which the mind would refuse to believe did not witnesses survive to testify to it, and did not the gaping wounds of the corpses furnish the most irrefutable evidence. The group of prisoners, men, women and children, were thrust against a wall and shot.

Eighty victims fell at that moment.

Was it there or at the Aqueduct of Neffe, which I mention later, that a three months' old child was killed? I no longer remember.

In the evening the Germans searched among the dead. Under the heap of bodies some poor creatures were still alive. They were taken out, added to some prisoners brought from elsewhere, and set to dig a pit for the dead. They were deported to Germany. Among them was a 15-year-old boy, son of M. Bourdon, the registrar, found under the bodies of his father, mother, brother and sister, all shot dead.

Among those buried was a woman who was still alive. She groaned. No matter. Her body was flung into the pit with the others.

Left bank of the Meuse. The Germans crossed the river.

The St. Médard district suffered relatively little. There were not many killed, and it is here that most of the houses remain standing.

Neffe suburb. The Germans searched the houses, burning a large number and leaving others untouched. Some inhabitants were left at liberty, others were driven out of the houses and shot on the road, others, again, were arrested and sent to Germany. Elsewhere whole families were murdered without distinction of age or sex (in particular the Guerys and the Morelles). The fire spread to one house where a woman with a broken leg was alone. Some inhabitants asked leave from the soldiers to go and rescue her. They were refused, and the poor woman was burnt alive.

In an aqueduct under the railway line about 40 people had taken refuge. They were fired at and bombs were thrown at them. The survivors decided to come out, and the men were arrested to be taken to Germany.

On Monday, 24th August, the Germans arrested the inhabitants of that part of the Grande Rue which had been spared the night before. They were imprisoned in the Premonstrant Abbey.

The few people who risked leaving the houses which were spared by the flames in the other districts were either arrested or fired at. Some were killed, in some instances by soldiers firing across the Meuse.

The heights which dominate the town were watched. Of the inhabitants who tried to escape by them, some succeeded, others were either arrested or killed.

Priests and monks, Professors at Belle Vue College, Brothers of the Christian Doctrine and Oblates were arrested and interned in a convent at Marche. About mid-September General von Longchamp, military governor of the province of Namur, came and released them with apologies from the German army!

All day on Monday and Tuesday the troops were looting and completing the task of burning the town.

Altogether in this town of over 1,400 dwelling-houses and 7,000 inhabitants, from 630 to 650 were killed, more than 100 of whom were women, children under 15, or old men. Only 300 houses remain standing.

Were any women outraged ?

Only one circumstance came under my direct notice. A very honourable citizen has stated to me that on the pretext of searching for arms they searched under his wife's body linen.

Dr. X. told me that there were numerous rapes. In his own circle of patients he knew of three indisputable cases.

Looting went on openly. At my house three days in succession men came with carts to remove my plate, bedding, of which none remains, furniture, male and female clothing, linen, chimney ornaments, a collection of weapons from the Congo, pictures, wines, and even the decorations of my grandfather, my father and myself. The mirrors were broken and the crockery smashed to atoms.

Sixty thousand bottles were stolen from the cellars of M. Piret, the wine merchant.

To my own knowledge there is not a single safe in the houses which remain standing which has not been forced or does not bear obvious marks of criminal attempts.

But what good will be served by prolonging this report, by relating the individual misfortunes of the number of citizens who have told me their harrowing stories ? Their general bearing is the same, and I have stated enough to prove that murder, arson and robbery were systematically organised, and carried out in cold blood, even after the battle was over.

These crimes were without justification. They were also predetermined.

I will prove this.

I. *Crimes without justification.* (i) The communal authorities had done their duty. They published and placarded a notice calling the attention of the citizens to the necessity of abstaining from any attack whatsoever, whether with or without arms, or from any threat towards the German soldiers.

Moreover they had commanded all weapons and ammunition to be deposited at the Town Hall. Their directions were scrupulously obeyed by everybody.

(ii) I mentioned at the beginning of this report the attacks on enemy patrols. I believe the list to be complete. If not, the reason is that after the lapse of ten months my memory is at fault, but I know that in August I knew every incident of that kind that had occurred in the district. On each occasion the enemy was attacked by regulars, either French or Belgian.

(iii) Did any of the people of Dinant fire at the German troops either on the night of the 21st or during the fighting on the 15th and 23rd ?

A direct answer is manifestly impossible. During the night of the 21st the people were asleep. On the 15th and 23rd they were in their cellars.

But it is highly improbable that people who respected patrols and single horsemen should have attacked the enemy when he was in force.

Moreover many trustworthy persons and I myself questioned a large number of people, who all stated not only that they did not fire, but they did not know and had never heard of anyone at all who had. The unanimous evidence of a whole population has certainly some weight.

(iv) Did the Germans catch in the act a single civilian who had fired at them ? Did they surprise a single person bearing arms, and were the facts established by a serious inquiry ? Not as far as I know.

But at Dinant an officer was seen trying to hide a revolver which he held in his hand, then to put that hand in the coat pocket of M. Pécasse, to draw the revolver out ostentatiously, shew it to his men, and have the unhappy victim of this infamous trickery taken away and shot.

(v) The Germans *admit* that there were no *francs-tireurs* at Dinant.

At Cassel the prison governor said to me : "The military authorities at Berlin are now convinced that no one fired at Dinant." Naturally I do not know what enabled him to make the statement.

Second admission. General von Longchamp, military Governor of the Province of Namur, speaking to me about the events at Dinant, said these very words to me : "It appears from an inquiry I have made that no civilian fired at Dinant. But there may have been French soldiers, disguised as civilians, who fired. And then in the heat of battle sometimes one goes further than is necessary.

I add that I have found no one at Dinant who gave me the smallest indication that this hypothesis as to the French soldiers had any foundation whatever.

II. *Premeditation.* The immediate and simultaneous attack on the people living on each one of the roads by which the German army entered Dinant in itself forms a serious presumption. It must be admitted either that orders were given beforehand or that *francs-tireurs* were acting on each and every one of the different points of entry. But no one was firing anywhere. Therefore—— !

But weighty as this presumption is, it cannot serve as the basis of a categorical affirmation. But what a confirmation it offers of the trustworthiness of the evidence which forms the direct proof !

Many residents in villages occupied before the 23rd August have declared that they were told beforehand that Dinant would be destroyed.

I mention one such piece of evidence because it derives peculiar importance from the personality of the narrator on the one hand and from the authority conferred on the author of the threats by his rank in the German army on the other hand.

M. X., of Dinant, at the time of the invasion was in another commune of the district. He made the acquaintance of a German officer, either a major or a colonel. On the 19th, 20th or 21st August (it is my memory that is in fault, for I was given the exact details), this officer said to M. X., "You belong to Dinant? Don't go back there. It is a wicked town and will be destroyed." At the same time he asked M. X. for information as to his house at Dinant. He went away, but returned on the 23rd August, and, taking a statuette from his luggage, shewed it to M. X., saying, "Do you recognise this?" "Yes. It comes from my house!" "Then I was right. I saved your house. It is not burnt."

These are the facts that I know concerning Dinant.

I have not sufficient documentary evidence to give a detailed report as to the neighbourhood.

I have heard many accounts, but as I was afraid of being searched I refrained from taking notes. Their discovery would have compromised not only my own safety but also that of my informants.

The close watch kept upon one in Belgium, moreover, prevented me from making a systematic investigation, which alone could have served as a check on the accounts I heard. I can therefore only state what I saw myself and some facts within common knowledge. I moved about the arrondissement somewhat and noticed the following:—

On the road from Dinant to Namur (right bank of the Meuse), the village of Houx is destroyed.

Many houses have been destroyed at Yvoir. I went no farther in that direction. Houx is the only place between Dinant and Yvoir. From Dinant to Namur by the left bank everywhere there are numerous houses burnt down.

Ciney road. The hamlet of Gemmechenne is almost destroyed. At Sorinnes only the church, the *château* and one farm are left. From thence to Ciney no damage. The same to Marche by Caijoux and Haversin.

I had occasion to go to Vierves, a commune in my arrondissement. I went there by the Meuse valley and returned by the hills.

I mention, without a single omission, all the places passed through or seen during this journey of nearly 65 kilometres.

Waulsort, partly burnt. Fifteen to 20 persons killed, including my secretary, who was murdered as he was being expelled from his house.

Hastièrre-par-delà. About a dozen of the 90 houses are standing. Many people shot, including Abbé Schloëgel, the priest of the place, and Dr. Halloy.

Hastièrre-Lavaux. One or two houses burnt.

Hermeton-sur-Meuse. Destroyed. Here, again, some people were killed. Among the victims was M. Ponthière, Professor at the University of Louvain.

Agimont was uninjured.

The journey took me into France at Givet, where, save at the barracks and fort, I saw no traces of destruction, nor at Viveux either. On re-entering Belgium, I found the station at Treignes and the neighbouring houses intact; the same at Vierves.

Romedenne is simply a heap of ruins.

Surice is razed to the ground. People were shot here.

Rosée and Morville, which can be seen from the road, which does not go through them, are partly burnt.

Anthée is destroyed. Murder was committed here.

Gérin, on the left of the road, shews the ruins of houses which were burnt.

Lastly, practically nothing is left of Onhaye.

In the Valley of the Lesse, the stations at Gendron and Houyet and the houses near them are burnt down. From thence to Rochefort (by rail) the villages are unharmed.

I made no other journeys in the arrondissement.

In order to compile this report and to estimate the worth of the evidence of which I have made use, I have employed all the prudence that my career as a magistrate for 19 years has taught me to be essential. I have made it with all the sincerity of an honest man.

I present it to you as a work of loyalty and good faith.

I have the honour to subscribe myself, M. le Ministre,

M. TSCHOFFEN.,

Public Prosecutor of Dinant.

B. *Deportation and Detention in Germany of 416 residents of Dinant.*

M. LE MINISTRE,

I have the honour to forward you the second part of the report you requested me to make.

It deals with the deportation to Germany and the detention in the prison of Cassel of 416 persons who were arrested at Dinant, on the 23rd and 24th August.

As I was one of the captives I can testify to the accuracy of the details which follow.

Almost all of us were arrested on the 23rd and taken in the evening to the plateau of Herbuchenne on the hills of Dinant. We were made to camp out in the open without food or drink. We had been in the hands of the Germans since the morning and nothing had been given us.

Some of the soldiers guarding us said that we would be shot at dawn; others that we would be taken to Coblenz; others, again, that we would be taken to Marche, where the German Staff would decide our fate.

We were given trusses of straw to lie on, and then silence was ordered.

When day broke no one was shot, but we were detained.

Two German officers were in command of the escort. They were unapproachable. Those who wished to address them were threatened with revolvers.

Near me a working man complained to his companions of the hunger that was torturing everybody, yet, said he, "I never had so costly a supper as I did last night." "What did you eat then?" "I had three 100 fr. notes, but when they searched us I swallowed them. They did not get them!"

At last they decided to send some of the prisoners, heavily guarded, to get water at a farm near by. On their return they told us that they had seen the corpses of the male inhabitants of the farm.

To enable us to drink we were made to collect empty tins. These were our drinking cups as far as Cassel.

The Captain of the 100th Infantry Regiment, who commanded our escort—of whom I spoke in my former report—saw a superb stallion in an enclosed paddock. He called it, and when the horse came to him, without any reason save the pleasure of evil doing, he killed it at close range with his revolver. Shortly afterwards (I did not see it, but many eye-witnesses told me about it) he also killed a mare and foal.

About 10 o'clock we were given a little soup.

They began to search us again and to take the money some of us had managed to hide the night before. These searches were made by the order and under the supervision of the captain, who went round, and never ceased threatening us with his revolver. The other officer, a lieutenant or sub-lieutenant, deemed it essential to wave both his arms, a revolver in one hand and a drawn sword in the other.

At last they marched us along the Ciney road. We passed the hamlet of Gemmechenne. It was almost completely burned down; then on to Sorinnes, which, save the *château* and a farm, was reduced to ashes.

All along the road troops and wagons were passing or in camps.

Everywhere we were subjected to insults and threats. We were told by signs that we were going to be shot, to be beheaded, to be hanged. Filth was thrown at our heads. Our faces were spat into. Yet we kept our heads high. It was not we who were debased by these things. An officer who watched us march by struck those passing near him with a whip. Others passed in numerous motors, shouting and brandishing revolvers at us. Until we got on to the train the same thing occurred whenever we met troops.

Our captain on horseback stopped from time to time and watched us pass by and sometimes addressed us. His conversation was monotonous and wanting in charm: "You are beasts. . . . You have behaved like beasts. . . ."

Halted at Achène. There we found French soldiers prisoners. All intercourse with them was forbidden.

Arrival of another group of prisoners from Dinant. They too had been robbed.

Second distribution of soup and departure for Conjoux. We had nearly reached the village when night fell. For some time we could only converse in whispers. In a damp field a camp was arranged under strict watch. We were ranged in a circle four ranks deep. In front and behind were numerous sentries.

We had to lie down closely packed together. We were forbidden to get up or speak on any pretext. Those who infringed this order would be shot, we were told.

About the middle of the night there were heartrending cries of "Help! Help!" We heard soldiers saying, "He's mad. Don't fire." Then a heavy sound of blows, and the fall of a body. The cries diminished and died away.

Next morning about 20 yards from the camp there was a body lying, the hand of which was slowly moving. It was one of the prisoners, a poor wretch of weak intellect. His father was with us. He was forbidden to go near his son. No attention was given to him and we were taken away, leaving him on the ground. He was, however, able to get up and reach Dinant.

Four children from 12 to 14 years of age, who were arrested when we were, were released.

After a distribution of a handful of biscuits to each of us, we set off again and were taken to Haversin by bye-roads. The order for the journey was: "If you hear shots, lie down. If any-one tries to escape he will be shot."

Instead of surrounding us, as on the evening before, the soldiers marched in file in the middle of the prisoners, who were in fours.

This precaution was due, so we learned later, to the fact that a body of French soldiers was still in the neighbourhood. They kept the field for a long time, and then nearly all succeeded in escaping to Holland in civilian clothes.

Cyclists preceded the column and cleared the inhabitants from our road.

At Haversin only the inhabitants were allowed to give us a little water.

Many suffered by the march. Some had sabots, but many had only slippers on. These were evidently very dangerous *francs-tireurs*!

During a halt a little soup was distributed.

At last Marche was reached. We had been nine hours on the way.

There were people in the streets. Those who had friends there tried to see, and especially to be seen. They would thus hear of us at Dinant, where our families must be devoured by anxiety. And they, the women and children, what fate was in store for them?

We were crowded into a room, which a notice over the door said would contain 100 soldiers. We numbered over 400! The Frenchmen were taken elsewhere.

The inhabitants sent us boots, hats and caps (most of us were bareheaded). They also sent us coffee and sandwiches. The German soldiers ate them.

Our captain appeared. "Those who still have money must hand it over, otherwise they will be shot. You will be searched down to your boots." The soldiers commenced another search, but, being tired, soon left off.

Some had picked up bottles on the way to fill with water if opportunity offered. This brought about a fresh visit from our amiable captain. "Drop those bottles. If a man is found with a bottle after this he will be shot."

No word from the Staff. Soldiers were asked if we might speak to an officer. They laughed and shrugged their shoulders. The Germans distributed crusts of bread to us. The crowding was abominable. Some managed to lie down, but the air there was so foul that they could not stay in that position. A companion in misery and I had a chair between us. We were among the fortunate ones. It was a relief when late next morning we were taken out of our prison. We took the Melreux road. On the way bread was handed round.

At the station at Melreux we were again counted and changed our guard. It was no advantage. A train made up of cattle trucks was in the station. We were hustled, punched and kicked into it and locked in. Cattle had been in the carriages before us. The dung had been hastily taken away. There were no seats and no straw.

After two hours waiting three soldiers got into our truck, and we left by the Amblève line.

Each time we stopped we were insulted by the soldiers on guard at the stations. Once in Germany it was worse still. If the platform was not on the side where the door was open they shut that at once and opened the other. If there were two platforms they opened the doors alternately so as the better to rejoice German hearts. We were treated like animals in a menagerie. Officers and soldiers—who were everywhere—gave the example to the civil population. The women and children were not behindhand with their insults and threatening gestures.

Our guards were welcomed as if they were doing a heroic deed.

At one station, I don't know which, we saw a woman cheering from her window. She tore open her bodice, shewed her breasts, and made the gesture of offering them to the soldiers.

The journey lasted 35 hours, during which we were only once given food and drink. Then we owed it to the Red Cross.

During the journey a prisoner who tried to escape from the moving train was killed by a revolver.

About 3 a.m. on the 28th August we alighted at Wilhelmshöhe station (Cassel). We were lined up, counted, and handed over to a fresh body of soldiers, and we were marched at a rapid pace through the streets of the town. Our arrival must have been announced beforehand, for, in spite of the early hour, a hostile, insulting, and threatening crowd lined the streets. There were women and even children there.

At the pace we went the old men and the halt could not follow. Their companions held them up and dragged them along, while the soldiers stimulated their flagging energies with rifle butts.

We reached the prison and were put into the cells, three or four together. M. Brichet, the forest inspector, when he was shut up, wished to take his son (14 or 15 years old) with him. "No father with his son," said a gaoler. M. Herbecq, the judge, was also separated from his son (16 years old). After two or three days, however, these two boys obtained leave to join their fathers.

Many others were not so fortunate.

I will not stop to relate the mental suffering that our captivity entailed—suffering which resulted from anxiety about our families and our country, and also from the uncertainty of the length of our detention, and from our isolation and want of occupation.

The day but one after our arrival we were taken to the bath and each one was given a pair of socks and a shirt. A comb was put in each cell.

We were made to fill up a form stating our identity. The prison authorities manifested their astonishment at seeing the kind of criminals brought to them. The majority were artisans and shop-keepers. With them were the Burgomaster of Dinant and a sheriff, professors at the Athenæum, the Receiver-General of Posts, the Forests Inspector, all the gaolers of Dinant (arrested at the prison itself with one of their prisoners), advocates, three assistant judges, two judges of the Tribunal, the Public Prosecutor and one of his assistants. There was one madman, about a dozen boys from 13 to 16 years old, and some old men, one of whom was 81.

After a week we were assembled in a courtyard and informed that we were not convicted, but detained for purposes of public safety and could write home. After another week each one was given a postcard. A fortnight later several received a sheet of notepaper and an envelope. Towards the end of our detention everyone could write almost as he pleased. It was almost useless. About a dozen letters at the outside reached Dinant before our return. It was not until mid-October that we could get permission to send to Belgium a list of those detained. Some of the letters sent to us reached Cassel.

Our prison was a very large one. There were 400 or 500 ordinary criminals, including some robbers condemned to penal servitude for life. They were under a more favourable *régime* than ours.

Our cells, shared by three and four persons, were 27 feet square, and contained about 32 cubic yards. They were lighted and ventilated by windows with ground glass panes, placed above the height of a man. The upper part could be half lowered to allow fresh air to enter. There was also a movable pane. By climbing on a box this pane could be opened, and one could see a courtyard of the prison and a little of the country. This was permitted to the ordinary criminals, but strictly forbidden to us.

Our furniture : a radiator, a table, some clothes pegs, a very small cupboard, a box of clothes brushes and shoe-brushes, a china mug, a stoneware pitcher, four tin bowls and four spoons, a little zinc washing basin, two hand towels, cut out of old prison clothes and never renewed, a bucket and a chamber. No seat, the frame of an iron bedstead,—of no use as the mattresses were removed—and two trusses of straw and four blankets. The straw was soon reduced to powder, but we had to wait nearly two months for another supply.

When we asked for more they put us off. It had been raining ; the peasants had not yet threshed their harvest, or there were no horses to bring the straw, &c. More often they simply shrugged their shoulders.

About eight or ten days before we left they put one or two chairs in each cell.

The ordinary criminals each had a chair and a bed.

Some cells were underground and were lighted by a window on a level with the courtyard. They were cold, damp and dark.

One day a week we were taken to the exercise yard for an hour. Under the guard of soldiers with fixed bayonets we walked in single file round the yard. We were forbidden to walk in pairs. Towards the middle of October the number of walks was increased, and made three, and then five, every week. They lasted not more than three-quarters of an hour. Except on Sundays, the German prisoners went out every day.

They were all set to work. As for us, at the end of a fortnight or three weeks some of us were put to gardening, path-making or washing. The choice of gangs was left to the gaolers. At first there seemed some desire to have a rotation, but the gaolers preferred to have the same men always, and soon it was always the same men who went.

Later there was some amelioration ; the tailors and shoemakers were found work. The Burgomaster of Dinant and six or seven others peeled potatoes. Towards the end of October an attempt was made to find work for a larger number of prisoners. The governor of the prison delegated everything concerning us to the Catholic schoolmaster attached to the prison, and he sought to relieve our ennui. The number allowed to work in the yards was increased. We were set to make door-mats and to stuff mattresses. I was one of about 30 who made bags. The work was done out of the cells. It was a double relief to escape the feeling of oppression of the walls and to have a change of companions. A large number of us could never get leave to go out of their cells for a moment or to get any employment of any kind.

To combat the universal boredom the prisoners made sets of dominoes drawn on paper, packs of cards and even chessmen, the pawns being made of bread. They were very tiny, as bread was scarce. A few packs of cards were also handed to us.

The food was quite insufficient. We received each day 450 grammes of sour black bread. In the morning a pint of tepid fluid, which may have been coffee. At midday, three-quarters of a litre of thick soup and in the evening half a litre of thin soup. Three times we had potatoes, never any meat. Turnip and cabbage soup was the usual fare. But after a time the latter kind became nauseating and unhealthy. Some of the prisoners were employed in cutting up cabbages for sauerkraut. They had to keep the damaged leaves carefully, and it was from those that our soup was made twice a week.

The German prisoners received bacon, herrings and perhaps meat, for once or twice one of us found in his soup a piece of meat smaller than a nut. I suppose that these accidents occurred through emptying into our soup what was left of that prepared for the Germans. They also had enough bread, for at the beginning of our detention they several times threw some to us in the yard through the windows of their cells.

This unlawful distribution was stopped by curtailing the circle of our promenade, and the bread no longer reached us.

In short, we were always hungry. Towards the end of October those of us who had acquaintances in Germany were able to receive money. We could then buy bread and sausage. Some bought as much as a pound of bread a day.

On our return the doctors at Dinant found that several of us had illnesses due to want of nutrition.

Tobacco was always forbidden.

There was a doctor attached to the prison. After some time we were allowed free access to him. It was not so at first.

A man named Croibien was slightly wounded by a bullet in the forearm at Dinant. The wound, which received little or no attention during the journey, became inflamed. In spite of his sufferings he was refused treatment at Cassel. It was only after some days that he was taken to the infirmary. They had to amputate his arm, and he died a day or two later. Neither during his life nor after his death were his father and brothers, who were also interned, allowed to see him.

According to those who went there, the infirmary was a miracle of dirtiness.

Medicines were given out with extreme parsimony. For example, M. C. asked the doctor for an arsenical medicine which he used at Dinant. "Have you any money?" said the doctor. "Yes." "Then you shall have the arsenic," and it cost 2 marks.

The religious services were the only things decently done, save that mass was said on Fridays instead of Sundays.

There was no reason for arresting us. I don't know those which induced them to release us.

One fine day we were told that we were going. Our return was carried out in four parties. The first left on the 18th November. The others left at intervals of a few days.

It would be unjust not to mention the courage with which every one bore his captivity. "Let them keep us as long as they like, provided that they are driven out and that we are masters of our own house when we get back," said a workman to me. He thus translated a desire which I know we all felt. "Liberty for us, yes, but for our country first of all."

M. TSCHOFFEN,

*Public Prosecutor of Dinant.**

SECTION II.

CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE REPORT OF THE GERMAN MILITARY COMMISSION OF INQUIRY AND OF ITS APPENDICES.

When one reads the depositions and extracts from field diaries reproduced, to the number of 87, in the "White Book," in order to justify the massacres of Dinant, what immediately strikes one is the unanimity with which they assert that the German Army was the victim of the most abominable treachery in Dinant and its environs.

The story, related in the General Report of the German Military Commission and its annexed documents, is not one of isolated shots, not even of an ambush in the streets of the town, but of a veritable battle, in which the whole populace were seen to take part and large German forces were engaged and held up. The Report mentions (*inter alia*) among the forces concerned in the action the 100th, 101st, 103rd, 108th, 177th, 178th and 182nd Infantry Regiments, the 11th Jäger Battalion, some cavalry, the 12th and 48th Field Artillery Regiments, and Engineers belonging to the 12th Army Corps (1st Saxon Corps).

The question arises whether it is possible that the statements contained in these documents were dictated by the single motive of saving the reputation of the German Army, or whether many of these witnesses, who include a certain number of officials and surgeons, a merchant, an engineer, etc., have stated in all sincerity what they believed they saw, and repeated what they were told, without any other thought than regard for the truth.

* M. Tschoffen's two reports are printed in full at pp. 86 to 105 of the second volume of Reports on the Violation of International Law in Belgium; *Rapports sur la Violation du Droit des Gens en Belgique* (Berger-Levrault, publishers, Paris-Nancy, 1915).

The Note of Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, of 31st October, 1915, has a special chapter devoted to the events at Dinant (see p. 337 of the present volume).

After analysing these documents and comparing them and looking at the reasoning of one in the light of the facts stated in another of them, it may be admitted that many of the witnesses really believed that they had to deal with *francs-tireurs*. Their minds had been so imbued with the legend that they unhesitatingly attributed any occurrence which they could not understand to the intervention of *francs-tireurs*.

* * *

The Reconnaissance of the evening of the 21st August. (Night of the 21/22 August.)
The statement of what happened on the evening of the 21st August and the conclusions drawn therefrom form a very striking example of this.

When the rear ranks of the 2nd Battalion of the 108th Regiment of Saxon Fusiliers, which was preceded by a section of Engineers, reached the first houses of Dinant, the troops were assailed on all sides; they were fired at from the houses and the hills, in the slopes of which there were caves and vaults (*Gewölbe*). When they tried to enter the houses, they found that the entrances were barricaded. Machine guns were posted in a corner house. The houses were set on fire, but there is no mention of any civilians being seized with arms in their hands. These are the statements in App. C 2. In App. C 3 it is also said that stones were thrown at the soldiers and that, when Lieutenant Brink entered the first side street on the left, he noticed that it was blocked by wires. An important point: when the troops reached the first houses of the town the public lighting was destroyed. In neither of these appended documents is there any mention of *francs-tireurs*; and from this silence one may safely assume that none were seen. Nor is there any question of *wounds caused by small shot*, although care is taken to mention that the section of the Engineers had 15 men slightly, and one man severely, wounded.

It may be noted that the statements in App. C 2 and C 3 are taken from the Journal* of the 108th Infantry Regiment and from that of the 1st Field Company of the 12th Battalion of Engineers, and were apparently written on the 22nd August.

Rost, a non-commissioned officer of the Army Medical Service, when questioned on the 6th March, 1915, six months afterwards, alleged, however, that on the 21st August, 1914, he saw women's heads behind the men, some of them in shirt sleeves, who were firing from the windows (App. C 59). A Reservist of the 108th Regiment, Emil Bruno Lange, who was also examined on the 6th March, declared that he saw an elderly woman fire from a house, which was lit up by a lamp *burning in the street* (App. C 60). Another man of the same regiment, Vorwieger, also stated, on the 6th March, 1915, that he had seen in a house, when he was about to enter it, a woman of about 30 years of age, who was standing up, revolver in hand, ready to shoot (App. C 61). A Reservist of the 12th Battalion of Engineers, Kurt Büchner, examined on the 6th November, 1914, stated that the persons who fired were civilians without any military insignia (App. C 4). Lieutenant Brink, who was in command of the section of Engineers, stated on the contrary, when examined on 20th February, 1915, that he did not see those who fired (*Die Schützen habe ich nicht gesehen*), but adds that they were certainly not soldiers, because the wounded had numerous wounds caused by small shot (App. C 5). Lastly, Dr. Köckeritz, while stating, on the 2nd February, 1915, that the inhabitants fired from their houses with sporting guns, does not say that he himself saw civilians do so, but seems, at least on this point, to be narrating what he had been told (App. C 67).

We therefore find that the assertions are contradictory. Must reliance be placed upon the statements of the war journals,† which were entered a very short time, perhaps only a few hours, after these events, or upon isolated depositions, which moreover do not agree with one another, obtained long afterwards? (According to the German non-commissioned officer Peisker, who was taken prisoner on the 17th September, 1914, the fire directed at the houses was for preventive purposes, see p. 177).

How could the witnesses have noticed that civilians were concerned, seeing that it was pitch dark, the public lighting having been destroyed when the German troops reached the first houses of Dinant?

* To be quite exact, these statements are taken from the reports of fighting (*Gefechtsbericht*) of the two units in question "on the battle at Dinant during the night of the 21st/22nd August, 1914."

† See note above.

If, therefore, the German troops making the reconnaissance really met with resistance,* they have not been able to ascertain definitely whether the resistance came from soldiers or civilians. But the obsession concerning *francs-tireurs* has so powerful an influence on the minds of officers that the "White Book" declares: "after this experience it must be admitted that the civilian population also took part in the struggle during the later operations" (p. 118). It was with this preconception that the German Army was to descend upon Dinant on the 23rd August.

Did French patrols meet the German forces on the night of the 21st August?

The "White Book" recognises the possibility of this, for it states that on that day the German troops found the bridge occupied by the enemy (p. 117). The French military authorities declare that from the 16th August the French troops were putting the town of Dinant into a state of defence, notably on the banks of the river, that the bridge itself was barred by wire entanglements, and that on the right bank of the Meuse there were some barricades of paving stones and some barbed wire entanglements in front of the piles of the bridge and near the church (see p. 167 of the present volume). But they make no allusion to engagements between French patrols and the Germans on this night. The Germans being drunk must have fought one another (see p. 168).

* * *

The sequence of presumptions in the minds of the German Commanders.—What did really occur at Dinant, a little town built along the Meuse and lying on both banks of the river, united by a fine bridge situated about the middle of the collection of houses?

A first engagement between the French and German forces took place on the 15th August; after succeeding in obtaining a footing on the right bank and even in crossing to the left bank, the Germans were in the afternoon driven back to the right bank and had also to evacuate the old citadel which dominates the town. They halted a few kilometres east of Dinant.

The Report of the German Military Commission affirms, however, that two days later "on the 17th August the enemy retired to the left bank of the Meuse. At this time," it continues, "Dinant, Leffe, and Les Rivages (suburbs of Dinant) were free of regular enemy troops."

That is inaccurate; the Report itself states, a few lines lower down, that a German reconnaissance which penetrated to the heart of Dinant during the evening of the 21st August found "the bridge occupied by the enemy army" (p. 117).†

This mistake of the German commanders is of extreme importance, for on it is based the argument which incriminates the civilian population.

This, as we have seen, is the case with regard to the reconnaissance of the 21st August. Although the identity of the persons responsible for the firing on that night was not established and the Journals of the 108th Regiment and of the 1st Company of the 12th Battalion of Engineers refrain from making a formal accusation against the population, the Report of the Berlin Military Commission declares that after this it was to be expected that the civilian population would also take part in the fighting during subsequent operations (p. 118).

Once on this descent there is no stopping, and prejudice develops all its force. In the preparations for defence made by the French Army and observed during the reconnaissance of the 21st August, the Report sees the proof that there was a premeditated plan for *francs-tireurs*. "It was clear," it says, "that this attack of the populace on the detachment sent out to reconnoitre (on the 21st) was carried out in accordance with a plan, that the people at Dinant were informed of the projected operation, and that advantage was taken of dispositions made long before for this purpose. The preparation consisted notably in making loopholes, with which a large number of houses and walls were provided" (p. 117 of the "White Book").

It is presumed without any proof or inquiry that these loopholes were made by the inhabitants.

* There is no mention of this either in M. Tschoffen's Report (p. 142) or in Mgr. Heylen's note (p. 338).

† We may also cite the extract, dated 22nd August, 1914, of the War Journal of the "General Command" of the 12th Army Corps, where it is stated that by a night attack the 2nd Battalion of the 108th Fusilier Regiment had, on the night before, near (*bei*) Dinant, driven the enemy back to the right bank of the Meuse (App. C 1). This, no doubt, also refers to the reconnaissance made on the evening of the 21st August by that battalion and a section of Engineers. The information seems to be erroneous, in this sense at least, that the reconnaissance did not have the result indicated.

It was with this pre-established conviction that the Germans on the 23rd August again presented themselves in strength at Dinant to force the passage of the Meuse. On that day the French troops were occupying the town in the same way as on the previous days, holding the left bank strongly and observing the right bank. They were posted in the houses, in the gardens which run in terraces up the slope, behind walls in which they had made loopholes ; machine guns had been set up in several places, in particular so as to command the approaches to the bridge. That part of the town built on the right bank had since the 16th August been traversed only by patrols, and weak reconnoitring detachments. But on the 22nd August Leffe was the scene of a little operation, carried out by a detachment of French engineers under the protection of a section of the 273rd. About 1 p.m. this detachment blew up a house, opposite the Rue St. Jacques, which prevented the French machine guns from enfilading this street in which the Germans would have to debouch as they came out of the citadel.

The able resistance put up by the French troops on the 23rd August is apparently attributed by the German Report mainly to the civilian population of Dinant. To read the German account the civilians sustained the combat alone, or practically alone.

One fact in any case appears from the German version itself, viz., that the prejudice, the existence of which in the minds of the German officers after the 17th and 21st August is recognised by the Report, coloured the conception which the German leaders had formed of the situation even before their arrival at Dinant on the 23rd August. From the 17th to the 23rd, the idea of *francs-tireurs* had continued to excite the already feverish imaginations of the invading troops, and on the 23rd, it would seem from the Report, it had become a veritable obsession of the German leaders. It may be taken for granted that their orders for that day reflected this obsession.

If such was the state of mind of the leaders after the 21st August, is it not evident that the image of everything that the common soldier saw, or thought he saw, on the 23rd would be fatally refracted and distorted by this formidable prejudice, under the mental oppression of which he was led to the fight ? Imagine this combatant, as the depositions in the "White Book" enable us to see him, coming along over-excited by the false alarms of previous reconnaissances, and scared to death at the prospect of street fighting in a hostile town, in narrow alleys, shut in between the river and the hills, and exposed to the fire of the French guns on the other bank. His power of observation while fighting, which his leaders had already concentrated upon one form of peril only, must have been wholly merged in his nervous excitement and anxiety and reduced to a kind of collective hallucination.

The authors of the Report are merely consistent with the premisses they have enunciated when they hold the entire civilian population of Dinant responsible for the acts of war of which their town was the scene. "They fired from the loopholes," says the German Report, "in an artful and treacherous manner, so as to be invisible from outside." (*Selbst unsichtbar nach aussen.*) The firearms were not only sporting guns and revolvers, but also Belgian machine guns and army rifles. After the affair of the evening of the 21st August, wires had been stretched across the streets (p. 122).

Faced with a defensive scheme of such elaboration, any other commander, who reasoned calmly and with full mastery of his nerves, would have come to the conclusion, at least in the first instance, that this was due to the enemy's regular forces. Here it was the exact reverse ; in the fact that the defenders were skilfully hidden the German leaders found confirmation of their fixed idea that the civilian population was concerned.

Again prejudice breeds prejudice ; in the very perfection of the defensive scheme which the assailants encountered, the Report finds proof of the support of the Belgian Government (p. 122 of the "White Book").

Such is the conclusion at which the Military Commission of Inquiry finally arrives by a series of deductions.

Even if simple soldiers might be excused for allowing themselves to be led astray by their obsession concerning *francs-tireurs*, what must be thought of the state of mind of the German leaders ?

It is to their want of perception and coolness, or rather to their obstinacy in insisting, in defiance of all appearances, on attributing to *francs-tireurs* the resistance they met with at Dinant that the unhappy people of this town owe their decimation (see the deposition of the German soldier prisoner, Breitschneider, at p. 177).

The question that every unbiassed person will ask is : Up to what point can reliance be placed upon the sincerity of the German defence ?*

* * *

The events of the 23rd August.—At the very beginning of the morning of the 23rd August, the 178th Infantry Regiment coming down towards the Meuse by the suburb of Leffe was forced to pass a building, which is sometimes called the Paper Mills and sometimes the Factory.

Several witnesses describe what occurred there.

Major Fränzel, of the 2nd Battalion of the 178th Infantry Regiment, two depositions by whom figure in the "White Book" (App. C 25 and 30), declares that they came under the fire of *francs-tireurs* in the factory. He ordered it to be searched, and, in spite of a minute search, nobody was found there except about a score of men in civilian clothes and a few women. He does not mention whether there were discovered, either upon them or in the factory, any kind of weapon whatsoever or any cartridges, but, as no Belgian or French soldiers were seen near and he does not believe that any soldiers would have been able to escape from the building (App. C 30), the Major, under orders from the Colonel, had all the men who were found inside shot (App. C 25).

Yet it is known that at this date the French still had patrols operating on the right bank of the Meuse.

The first executions were to be followed by sad consequences to others besides the victims. Paul Otto Macher, a non-commissioned officer of the 8th Company of the 178th Infantry Regiment (App. C 29), when examined on the 14th February, 1915, stated that, on entering Leffe on the morning of the 23rd August, he saw lying there the bodies of some civilians who had been killed ; he noticed that the houses were shut and the ventilators of the cellars barricaded. Some soldiers told him to be on his guard as there had been firing from the houses. Rifle shots were heard ; searches were being made in the houses†. Civilians were dragged out, but no weapons were found ; at least Macher does not say they were. If it had been so, it is certain, having regard to the care of the investigators to demonstrate that the troops were attacked by *francs-tireurs*, that the fact would have been mentioned.

No material proof is given, and the witness is obliged to base his conviction as to the presence of *francs-tireurs* upon a process of reasoning : "The shots fired about 10 p.m. must in my opinion, have been fired by civilians, as our troops were already in possession of the left bank."

This fact is not established. According to the reports of the French military authorities (see below p. 167), the Germans who crossed to the left bank on the 23rd August were counter-attacked that evening by the reserves of the 1st French Army Corps and driven into the Meuse. It was not until the night of the 23rd/24th August that the French troops retired to the South.

In his Note of the 31st October, 1915, Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, states that *there was no street fighting whatever at Dinant, and that no civilian was taken or found carrying arms.* (See p. 339.) M. Tschoffen in his Report certifies that the people unanimously declared that no inhabitant of Dinant fired at the German troops (p. 145).

* * *

The Executions of the 24th and 25th August. The 23rd August was the most bloody day, but many civilians were also killed on the 24th and 25th August. To justify these outrages, it is suggested that the *francs-tireurs* did not abandon the struggle on the 23rd August, and that during the two days following the German columns, and also individuals, were still subjected to sniping from the hills and the houses. This, says the Report of the Military Commission of Inquiry, necessitated reprisals (p. 121). Inhabitants taken in the act were shot in every part of the town on the 24th and 25th August, and on the 24th August some houses of Leffe and St. Médard, which were occupied by *francs-tireurs*, were bombarded. How are these acts of *francs-tireurs* proved ?

In the first place, by an extract from the War Journal of the 1st Battalion of the 19th Field Artillery Regiment, which states that on the 24th August, 1914, the road

* According to the Report of M. Tschoffen, the Public Prosecutor (see p. 145), and the Note of Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur (p. 346), the destruction of Dinant was premeditated.

† Macher relates that some of these searches were carried out under the direction of Sergeant Schuster. In one house, as the door of a cellar was not voluntarily opened by the inmates—at least according to Schuster—the latter, instead of breaking the door open with a hatchet, fired a shot through it and mortally wounded a woman who had taken refuge there. There is no mention of arms seized in this cellar or of arrests of the people found there.

of the Meuse valley between Dinant and Leffe was not practicable owing to destroyed houses, fires, and to the fact that the inhabitants were firing from their houses. These last words are printed in spaced letters in the German text (App. C 21).

This is not a positive statement. The assertion is noted in the Journal on the report of a mere reconnaissance; the battalion itself remained some distance off.

Something more definite than this was necessary; the German Report has realised this and refers in express terms (p. 121) only to the depositions in App. C 49 and 50, thus completely ignoring the assertion in the report of the artillery battalion. These depositions are the only ones which relate to the 24th August. In one of them, a chaplain on the afternoon of the 24th August, while in a courtyard with a captain eating a plate of soup, was subjected to several shots (App. C 50); the other deposition mentions shots coming from several places. These alleged attacks cannot have been serious, for the witnesses do not even take the trouble to say whether the houses were set on fire; they only state that two civilians were shot.

These facts do not really seem to justify—even if they are accurate—the assertion in the Report of the battalion of Field Artillery that the road of the Meuse Valley was not practicable by reason of firing by inhabitants. How is it possible to believe in firing on the 24th August after the frightful massacres of the day before?

* * *

*The shooting of hostages at Les Rivages (Rocher Bayard).** Special mention must be made of a tragedy of surpassing horror which took place at the suburb of Les Rivages (Rocher-Bayard).

According to the Report of the Berlin Military Commission, German troops, in particular the 101st Grenadier Regiment and the 3rd Company of Field Pioneers, reached Les Rivages during the afternoon of the 23rd August (p. 120 and App. C 39). The building of a bridge over the Meuse was at once begun; the soldiers at work were the target for shots which the German authorities attribute, at least in part, to civilians. The material fact is that near the place where the pioneers had begun the bridge there was found on the evening of the 23rd August an enormous heap of corpses of townsfolk who had been shot. Some of them had a short time before been taken as hostages (p. 121). In this heap were found some poor creatures who were only wounded, including a little girl of eight, an aged woman (Deposition of Baron von Rochow, Lieutenant of Reserve, App. C 47), a little girl of five, who was unwounded, and another little girl of about ten, who had a wound on the lower part of the thigh† (Deposition of Dr. Petrenz, App. C 51).

The recognition of this brutal fact by the German authorities does not prevent Major Paazig, who apparently shrinks from the horror of such an avowal, from declaring that the wounds on the corpses were in some cases very serious and appeared to have been caused by artillery fire. (App. C 49).

This supposition is quite incorrect, for Dr. Petrenz acknowledges that this butchery was the result of an execution carried out by the 101st Infantry Regiment (App. C 51), and another witness, Carl Ermisch, Captain of Reserve, says that the hostages were shot on the orders of an elderly officer of the 101st Grenadier Regiment, whom he does not name (App. C 46).

The "White Book" has the audacity to justify this abominable execution by the military objective (*Kriegszweck*) to be attained (the rapid crossing to the left bank of the Meuse) and by the perilous situation of the troops, who are alleged to have been treacherously attacked in the rear by the people (p. 123). This is how the Report of the Military Commission of Inquiry deals with the matter:—

"It is important to bear in mind, when forming an opinion on the attitude of the troops of the 12th Army Corps towards the extremely hostile behaviour of the civilian population, who were using most objectionable methods, that the tactical object of the 12th Army Corps was to cross the Meuse rapidly and to drive the enemy from the left bank of the river. To put an immediate end to the resistance of the inhabitants opposing the accomplishment of this object constituted a *necessity of war* (*Kriegsnotwendigkeit*), and it was necessary to bring it about by all possible means. From this point of view alone there is sufficient justification for the bombardment of the town, which was taking an active part in the combat, the burning of houses occupied by *francs-tireurs* and the shooting of inhabitants taken with weapons in their hands.

* Hostages were shot in several parts of the town.

† This cannot have been the same child as the one of whom Lieutenant von Rochow speaks, for he says that the little girl had a face wound, whilst the one found by Dr. Petrenz was wounded in the lower part of the thigh.

“Moreover, the *shooting of hostages*, which took place in several parts of the town, was also in accordance with the law. The troops fighting in the town were in a situation of extreme and pressing danger by reason of the fact that, while under the fire of the artillery and machine guns and of the infantry of the regular forces of the enemy posted on the left bank of the Meuse, they also at the same time were subjected to fire from behind and in flank from the inhabitants. Hostages were taken to put an end to these operations of *francs-tireurs* (*Franktireurwesen*). As the inhabitants, in spite of this, continued as before to inflict losses on the troops who were fighting, the hostages were executed. Otherwise the taking of hostages would be merely an empty threat. Their execution is all the more justifiable in that, owing to the general participation of the inhabitants in the fighting, it would have been difficult to find any innocent persons. This measure was unavoidable, having regard to the military objective (*Kriegszweck*) to be attained, and the dangers of the situation for the troops, who were treacherously attacked in the rear” (p. 123).

It will be seen that the execution of hostages in a body without any inquiry becomes lawful whenever it may assist to accomplish a military objective. It does not seem to be established in any way that the shots fired at the pioneers building the bridge were fired by civilians. At 6 p.m. on the same day Major Karl Adolph Heinrich von Zeschau,* adjutant of the General commanding the 12th Army Corps, arrived at the Meuse at Les Rivages. He states that the Grenadiers of the 101st Regiment were in order of march and only awaited the completion of the bridge to cross over to the left bank. The houses were closed, and all seemed quiet (pp. 120 and 184). Nevertheless he inquired whether the houses near by had been searched, and, as this precaution had been neglected, it was immediately begun, and a sergeant came and reported to the Major that *the houses were empty*.

Shortly afterwards, when the bridge was half finished, the Major returned to the General to report to him (App. C 45).

To ensure safety, even before the arrival of Major K. A. H. von Zeschau, the Grenadiers had already taken a large number of inhabitants as hostages (p. 121 and App. C 39). Moreover, a man, whom the German documents call the Burgomaster of Les Rivages, had come and given an assurance that the inhabitants, who were indeed without weapons, meditated no attack on the troops (App. C 43 and 44, and p. 121). This man, who was not Burgomaster of Les Rivages (for this place is not a separate commune), was sent by the German authorities over to the left bank of the Meuse “to counsel the people of Neffe to remain quiet” (p. 121).

But when the German troops reached Les Rivages and began to build the bridge, there were still detachments of the French Army on the other bank: the War Journal of the 3rd Field Company of Engineers notes this, stating that the enemy fire from the left bank at this time was very weak (App. C 39).

Some time after the work was begun, a violent fusillade began (App. C 39 and 43). The War Journal of the 101st Grenadier Regiment contains the following passage: “The pioneers began to build a bridge over the Meuse; but violent enemy firing coming partly from infantry and partly from the inhabitants of the further bank (*auf dem jenseitigen Ufer*) pierced the pontoons and rendered it impossible to continue the construction of the bridge” (App. C 43).

What does this mean? Simply that the French troops, who had units and patrols on the left bank of the Meuse, slackened their fire at first so as to give the workmen confidence (App. C 39), and then began again as soon as the pontoon builders became an easy target.

The report of the 101st Regiment, it is true, adds the statement that inhabitants were also firing from the right bank; but this cannot be reconciled with Major von Zeschau’s personal observation, with the searches which he caused to be made in the houses, or with the fact that the Grenadiers had seized hostages on their arrival at Les Rivages. It is only upon hearsay that Von Zeschau reports at the end of his deposition (App. C 45) that shortly after his departure shots were fired from some houses which were apparently empty. On questions of time alone, several of the depositions and reports seem quite irreconcilable with Major K. A. H. von Zeschau’s personal observation.

This officer, adjutant of the General in command of the 12th Army Corps, and therefore offering special guarantees of intelligence and accuracy in his reports, states that when he arrived at Les Rivages at 6 p.m. on the 23rd August, all was quiet. The Grenadiers of the 101st Regiment were peacefully waiting to pass over the bridge; and the pontoon men had already half finished their work when Major von Zeschau

* Not to be confused with Major Arnd Maximilian Ernst von Zeschau (App. C 40).

left this place, about 6.30 p.m. apparently. He makes not the slightest allusion to fighting with civilians having taken place an hour earlier.

However, the "White Book" adopts the statements of Sergeant (and acting officer) Ebert, of the 11th Company of the 101st Regiment, according to whom at this very place he and his comrades were at 5 o'clock the object of a violent fusillade, shots being fired on all sides (App. C 58)*, and the deposition of Reserve Captain Carl Ermisch to the effect that about 4 or 5 o'clock in the afternoon a fairly violent fire was directed at the bridge which was being built; Ermisch distinctly observed that the firing came from the right bank of the Meuse, in particular from a red house near Rocher-Bayard. (App. C 46.)

How can one accept without distrust these depositions which are formally contradicted by Major von Zeschau and clearly show that their authors were under the influence of their continual dread of *francs-tireurs*. Captain Ermisch had, in fact, noticed, an hour before, that there were no troops in the neighbourhood (*Es waren weder französische noch deutsche Soldaten zu sehen*); in his opinion, therefore, it follows that *francs-tireurs* must have fired these shots. But it is known that French troops were in ambush on the left bank of the stream right opposite Les Rivages (App. C 46).

It is important to set out here the passage from the Report of the Public Prosecutor of Dinant (See Section I. of this Chapter), which relates to the execution of hostages near the floating bridge thrown over the Meuse at Les Rivages by the Germans. M. Tschoffen says (p. 144):—

"The troops who came by the Froidvau road occupied the 'Penant' district. The inhabitants were arrested when the Germans arrived and kept under observation near Rocher-Bayard. The fire of the French having slackened, the Germans began to build a bridge. But a few bullets still annoyed them. As they were not numerous the Germans came to the conclusion—honestly or otherwise—that they were fired by *francs-tireurs*. They sent M. Bourdon, assistant Registrar of the Tribunal, over to the left bank to announce that if the firing continued the inhabitants who were prisoners would be executed. He carried out his mission and then re-crossed the Meuse, and surrendered, informing the German officers that he had been able to satisfy himself that French soldiers alone were firing. A few French bullets still came, and then a monstrous thing occurred, which the mind would refuse to believe did not witnesses survive to testify to it and did not the gaping wounds of the corpses furnish the most irrefutable evidence; the group of prisoners, men, women and children, were hustled against a wall and shot!

"80 victims fell at that moment."†

This account by M. Tschoffen is not only confirmed, but exact details are given on a point of capital importance by Private Schönherr, of the 101st Grenadier Regiment, who was taken prisoner at Châlons-sur-Marne on the 8th September, and when examined by the French authorities on the 5th June, 1915, at the dépôt at Blaye, made the following statement:—

"On the 23rd August we arrived at Dinant and I was detached with the corps of pioneers occupied in throwing a bridge; I did not in consequence pass through the town, where a number of houses were on fire. As we were bringing along the pontoons and just as we had piled arms so as to be more comfortable, we were fired at. A section and an officer were ordered to ascertain where the firing came from. They captured some French and Belgian soldiers; the latter were elderly men. The firing could not have been by civilians, as it was volley firing. Near the rock I saw a large building where there were collected under military guard 200 women and children. Having left Dinant, etc. . . ."

No more than the Belgian magistrate does the German soldier admit that shots were fired by civilians at the soldiers constructing the bridge. Schoenherr is very exact: "The firing could not have been by civilians, as it was volley firing" (See the complete deposition of Schönherr, p. 183).

The officer who gave the order to shoot the hostages at Les Rivages will bear a terrible responsibility in history. The German military authorities seem to realise this, for, though it is said in App. C 46 that he was an elderly man, his name, contrary to the usual practice, is not mentioned.

The anxiety to present the German Army as the victim of attacks by *francs-tireurs* and the care to justify at all costs its attitude towards the civilian population appear even in the exaggerated character of the defence which certain of the witnesses undertake.

* The results of this violent fusillade were not serious. Ebert merely mentions that some pellets were lodged in the stock of the rifle of one of his comrades.

† Among the victims were M. Bourdon, his wife, one of his sons, and his daughter.

In this connection the assertions of Major Schlick, commanding the 1st Battalion of the 101st Grenadier Regiment, with regard to the events at Les Rivages deserve special attention (App. C 44). Is it not with the intention of justifying the slaying of women and children that this officer writes on two occasions that men of all ages, innumerable (*unzählige*) women, and even ten-year-old girls took part in the struggle? During the street fighting, about a score of inhabitants, including several women, who were firing like maniacs and behaving in a particularly vile and perfidious manner, were shot dead, "so as to defend ourselves against them (says Schlick), and also to deter (*abschrecken*) the inhabitants from committing fresh atrocities." The street fighting lasted until night and the burning of the whole district at last put an end to the base behaviour of the inhabitants. The Major can swear that the measures taken were merely acts of legitimate defence. He adds that the situation of the troops, particularly at the place where the bridge was built, deserved the name, in the true sense of the word, of a witches' Sabbath (*Hexenkessel*), performed by an army (*Heer*) of men and female furies (*Weiber*) and was as bad as could possibly be imagined. Schlick has ever since, in spite of the terrible impressions of this combat, admired the calmness of the German soldiers in the presence of such brutes (*Bestien*), and the fact that they never gave way to cruelty even when themselves exposed to the worst forms of it. This officer relates that about 100 to 150 men, women, and children were taken to the left bank of the Meuse on the first pontoons thrown across the stream "as much to prevent them committing fresh crimes as to remove them from the fearful combat" (App. C 44). It would appear, though, that at this time the left bank was still held by the French, who were attempting by their fire to prohibit access to it by the Germans. Major Schlick does not mention that there was a single German soldier killed or wounded in the course of this terrible combat.

* * *

In the suburb of Neffe inhabitants who had taken refuge under an aqueduct were fired upon.—Some of the facts related in the "White Book" are explained in the most natural manner without in any way proving the existence of *francs-tireurs* warfare.

This is the case with regard to the following incident which is related by the Public Prosecutor of Dinant and also in various depositions inserted in the "White Book."

The magistrate relates that at Neffe "about 40 people had taken refuge in an aqueduct under the railway line. They were fired at and hand grenades were thrown at them. The survivors decided to come out, and the men were arrested, to be taken to Germany."

It was extremely natural that people should take refuge under this aqueduct to escape from the fire of the combat, which was about to take place or had already begun, between the French and German forces; Major Arnd Maximilian Ernst von Zeschau, a major of the 101st Grenadier Regiment, says in fact that 200 yards away his men were fighting the French infantry (App. C 40).

This major had ten or a dozen shots fired into the aqueduct, on the pretext that shots had been fired from this retreat and that arms were found there.

The explanation of this abominable act must be accepted with great caution, when the mild treatment of the survivors is borne in mind. According to orders given at Dinant any person whatsoever firing or being taken with weapons was to be shot. The haste and levity with which these superior orders were executed, especially by the 101st Grenadier Regiment, detachments from which were operating in this place, are known. Can it therefore be supposed that civilians found in possession of 8 or 10 carbines (*karabinerartige Waffen*) would have merely been handed over by these same Grenadiers to the care of other soldiers? Moreover, does not the mad imprudence of the conduct attributed to these civilians constitute in itself an argument in favour of their innocence?

Apparently, in order to justify this abominable act, our enemies were driven to diminish the horror of it by putting forward, as always, the excuse that these poor creatures had behaved as *francs-tireurs*.

* * *

Want of coolness on the part of the German troops.—A very characteristic fact, which illustrates the morbid nervousness of the German soldiers and the ease with which they lost their heads, is related in App. C 14.

Two corporals of the 12th Company of the 108th Infantry Regiment relate there that on the afternoon of the 23rd August some infantry were called to the help of a

field artillery train which was attacked near the fort of Dinant by eight civilians armed with rifles.

There were, therefore, at least a score of soldiers calling for the assistance of infantry to fight eight civilians !

Another fact. Lieutenant Schreyer, seeing from the right slope of "Fonds de Leffe" some suspicious rascals (*verdächtiges Gesindel*) on the opposite slope, fired at the group without any provocation, simply because these people, seen from a distance, appeared to him to be suspicious characters (App. C 26, p. 157).

Yet another fact. Major-General Francke, commanding the 182nd Infantry Regiment, relates that—doubtless on the 23rd August, though the date is not given—there was brought to him a man wearing a Red Cross brassard, whom the soldiers for some vague and improbable reasons suspected of firing at the German troops.

This man declared that he was a doctor and had not fired a shot, so the General ordered him to attend to the wounded ; as he had nothing with him for this purpose the General sent him to find material in a chemist's shop near by.

When he got there, the doctor tried to escape, and the conclusion they draw from this attempt is that the man was a *franc-tireur* (App. C 16), and only wore the Red Cross brassard to enable him under its protection to do harm to the Germans with less risk (p. 122 of the "White Book").

Is not the conduct of this man explicable if one assumes that he had witnessed the acts of the German soldiers and had reason to fear that, as he was under suspicion of having fired, he would—as were the hostages of Les Rivages, the people in the Factory at Leffe and so many others—be handed over to a firing party ? Having failed in his attempt to escape, he was shot out of hand by the corporal and private who went to the chemist's shop with him. General Francke, who tells the story, has not a single word to say against this act of summary justice.

* * *

The treatment of old men, women and children.—Certain improbabilities have already been noted in the depositions reproduced in the "White Book." There are also statements which are directly contrary to clear and indisputable facts. This is particularly the case with regard to the treatment meted out to women, children and old men, who were spared except where they were taken red-handed or where measures of legitimate defence had to be taken against them (p. 123).

Thus Captain von Montbé makes the general statement that the German troops did not ill-treat the people of Dinant (App. C 8). Dr. Sorge, Reserve assistant surgeon of the 1st Battalion of the 108th Fusilier Regiment, says that women, old men, and children were always spared (App. C 5). Captain Wilke, of the 6th Company of the 178th Infantry Regiment, says that he received orders to that effect (App. C 26). Oswald Göpfert, drummer in the 3rd Battalion of the 178th Infantry Regiment, affirms that only the men were shot, and that the women and children were taken in safety to a convent (App. C 79). The War Journal of the 100th Grenadier Regiment states that the inhabitants without weapons were taken to prison, and that the old men, women and children were released (App. C 6). Walter Löser, Reserve lieutenant of the 5th Company of the 100th Grenadier Regiment assures us that only those civilians who fired at the troops were shot, that the soldiers were not guilty of any cruelty, and that they carried, even past rows of burning houses, infirm old men and children (App. C 80). Non-commissioned officer Teubner and Sergeant Bartsch, both of the Machine Gun Company of the 103rd Infantry Regiment, both saved and saw other soldiers save, sometimes at the risk of their lives, men, women and children from the cellars of burning houses (App. C 53 and 81). George von Lüder, Captain of the 2nd Battalion of the 103rd Infantry Regiment, also observed much kindness on the part of the soldiers towards the people of Dinant (App. C 85). Severin Schröder, Captain of the 6th Company of the 103rd Infantry Regiment, relates that on the night of the 23rd August he caused to be given to some civilians, about 150 to 200 in number, including many women and children, who had been detained as prisoners in some houses, bread, rice and sausages out of the provisions which by his orders his men had gone to take for their own needs from some partly destroyed houses (App. C 84). Dr. Marx, chief surgeon of Reserve of the 2nd Battalion of the 100th Grenadier Regiment, on the 23rd August attended wounded inhabitants of Dinant, and during the whole day noticed no excesses on the part of the German soldiers (App. C 87). George Bartusch, sergeant in the 1st Battalion of the 100th Grenadier Regiment, believes that the 50 or 100 people shot by order of Lieutenant-Colonel Kielmansegg were all men, but he admits the possibility that some of the women and children, sheltering behind the wall against

which the guilty persons were placed, may have been killed either by bullets which went through the wall or by the fire of the enemy from the left bank (App. C 10). Franz Schlosser, a private in the 10th Company of the 101st Grenadier Regiment, asserts that, when he was on the left bank of the Meuse, he saw several women fire from a house at himself and his comrades. The houses were searched, and he believes that only women and children were found in them. There is no mention in the deposition of arms or ammunition which logically should have been found there. However, the houses were set on fire, and the women and children taken away as prisoners (App. C 42). Lastly, Lieutenant Lemke, of the 6th Company of the 103rd Infantry Regiment, during several days following the burning of Dinant, provided a certain number of inhabitants with food and clothing. He specially mentions that he had flour served out to the Red Cross hospital set up at Bouvignes. The Burgo-master and the "châtelain" of Bouvignes, and also a certain M. van Willmart seem on this occasion to have formed a high opinion of Germany* (App. C 83).

Even admitting that all these witnesses tell the truth, which the statements of several German prisoners (see pp. 168-203) make it impossible to do unreservedly, how is the considerable number of old men, women and children killed at Dinant on the 23rd and 24th August to be accounted for? The list of bodies identified contains the names of 71 females, of 34 persons over 70 years of age, and 39 children or young persons under 16 years of age, the youngest of whom was 3 weeks old!

Who will believe that all these old men, women and children were either caught with weapons or were struck by French or German bullets, or, again, that at Les Rivages they left the place assigned to them to rejoin the group of male hostages? Were the latter killed with such haste that it was not even noticed that there were women and children among them? (p. 144, para. 5).

Moreover, even if, particularly after the abominations of the 23rd August, German doctors attended to wounded civilians, if food was given to persons detained as prisoners, if soldiers behaved properly towards the inhabitants, and if some of them even took old men and children out of burning houses, none of this in any way lessens the responsibility of the military leaders who ordered the murder of over 600 persons and the burning of 1,263 houses in this town of 7,700 inhabitants and 1,653 houses. Those doctors and soldiers who behaved as alleged merely fulfilled the most stringent of duties. To mention with such insistence acts so natural as these is a clear mark of a disturbed and uneasy conscience.

* * *

The people of Dinant took no part in the battle.—One is amazed when, considering the charges formulated in the "White Book" against the people of Dinant, one recalls the statements made to the Public Prosecutor of this town by the German Governor of the Province of Namur and by the Governor of Cassel prison. The latter said to him: "The military authorities at Berlin are now convinced that no one at Dinant took part in the firing." General von Lonchamp stated: "It appears from an inquiry that I have made that no civilian fired at Dinant. But there may have been French soldiers disguised as civilians who did. And then in the heat of battle sometimes one goes further than is necessary." M. Tschoffen adds that he found nobody at Dinant to give him the slightest indication that there was any foundation at all for the hypothesis as to the French soldiers.

M. Tschoffen thus states his own personal opinion on the question of the alleged participation of the people of Dinant in the fighting:—

"Did any of the people of Dinant fire at the German troops, either on the night of the 21st August or during the days of fighting between the 15th and the 23rd? A direct answer is manifestly impossible. On the night of the 21st the inhabitants were asleep. Between the 15th and the 23rd they were in their cellars. But it is highly improbable that people who respected patrols and single horsemen should have attacked the enemy when he was in force. Moreover, many trustworthy persons and I myself questioned many people who all stated, not only that they did not fire, but that they did not know, and had never heard of, anyone who did. The unanimous evidence of a whole population has certainly some weight."

The account of the Belgian magistrate, which is reproduced in full (*ante* at pp. 142 *et seq.*), confirms the statements collected by the Belgian Commission and the English Committee of Inquiry on the subject of the events of which Dinant was the scene.†

* And yet they had witnessed the massacres and burning of Dinant!

† Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, has made similar statements as to the attitude of the people of Dinant (see pp. 338 and 339).

One may be permitted to think that the measured tone of the account which M. Tschoffen gives, for example, of the events at Les Rivages (Rocher-Bayard), is more convincing than the passionate rhetoric of Major Schlick's special pleading.*

Besides, the communal administration of Dinant on the 6th August, as the German military authorities have indeed stated, caused these two notices signed by the Burgomaster, M. Defoin, to be posted up. (See also p. 129, note *, the Notice of the Governor of the Province of Namur, 7th August, 1914). Their text was as follows :—

“ I. *Notice to the Inhabitants of the Town of Dinant.*

“ Notice is given to the inhabitants, under pain of immediate arrest, that they must bring to the Police Office all apparatus for transmitting or receiving messages by wireless telegraphy, and all firearms and munitions that they may possess.”

“ II. *Notice to the Inhabitants.*

“ Formal notice is hereby given to the inhabitants that civilians must not attack or do any violence by means of firearms or otherwise to the enemy forces.

“ Such attacks are forbidden by International Law and will expose the guilty parties, and perhaps even the town, to very grave consequences.”

The orders of the communal authorities were strictly carried out and understood by the inhabitants, who were already aware of what the German Army had done in the towns and villages in the north of the Province of Liège.

* * *

Francs-tireurs fired at a convoy of Belgian prisoners.—Some idea may be formed of the power of the dread of *francs-tireurs* over the mind of German officers from the statement of Sub-Lieutenant Lemke that some shots, fired at Dinant-Bouvignes one night between the 23rd and 26th August, were fired by *francs-tireurs* (App. C 83).

There could hardly have been many other German troops at Dinant-Bouvignes at the date when this fusillade occurred besides a section of the 6th Company of the 103rd Infantry Regiment.† There was, on the other hand, a convoy of 3,700 Belgian soldiers, prisoners, halted on the railway near Dinant Station. About 3 a.m. shots were fired, a panic among the prisoners then followed, and two Belgian soldiers were killed by sentries. Another Belgian was wounded by small-shot. Can it be supposed that Belgian *francs-tireurs* fired in the darkness at a column of compatriots ?

Sub-Lieutenant Lemke adds that Belgian officer prisoners and the Burgomaster of Bouvignes, to whom he explained the circumstance, expressed themselves in severe terms on the subject of *francs-tireurs*.‡ Neither the evidence of the Burgomaster of Bouvignes nor that of the Belgian officers is to be found in the “ White Book.”

Dr. Petrenz declares that at Dinant he had under treatment a civilian who told certain officers of the Grenadier Regiment that he was shot by some *francs-tireurs* because he would not let them hide in his house. The evidence of this civilian does not appear in the “ White Book ” and his name is not given.

Shots fired from a field hospital.—A large house on the left bank of the Meuse had been equipped as a Red Cross Hospital. The Geneva flag was flying on the house.

When the attack of the Germans developed on the 23rd August and they fired cannon and machine guns at the left bank, naturally the protection of the wounded in this building was considered. The windows were barricaded with mattresses, blankets, planks, &c.

This was enough to justify the assertion that the house, though flying the Red Cross flag, had been put into a state of defence.

Bruno Esche, a non-commissioned officer of the 100th Grenadier Regiment, who was on the right bank on the afternoon of the 23rd August, inspected this house through his field glasses and noticed the material fact that the openings were blocked. He alleges that he also saw loopholes at the height of a man (App. C 70). Esche

* See p. 221.

† This section was commanded by Lemke, who, although only a Reserve sub-lieutenant, was, at the date he mentions, commandant at Dinant-Bouvignes. The Belgian prisoners certainly did not pass through before the night of the 24th August.

‡ According to the Note of Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, dated 31st August, 1915, the Burgomaster of Bouvignes denies Sub-Lieutenant Lemke's statement (see p. 339).

is certainly mistaken. The supposed loopholes were probably holes made in the rooms at the floor level for purposes of ventilation in accordance with the usual practice in some parts of Belgium.

A Reserve officer of the same regiment, Ernest Rudolf Prietzel, had his attention attracted by the same building. He examined it, and the sole thing he mentions is that the boundary walls of the property* were pierced by loopholes; he therefore concludes that the place was organised for defence (App. C 9).

One point to be noted is that neither of these officers states that any shots were fired from this building.

However that may be, an officer of the same regiment, the 100th Grenadiers, Captain Zeidler, asserts that there was vigorous firing from this building (App. C 69); Lauterbach, a non-commissioned officer of the 108th Fusilier Regiment, declares that rifle volleys were fired from the hospital (App. C 56). Dr. Köckeritz (App. C 67) gives similar evidence.†

* * *

Acts of Cruelty.—The Report of the German Military Commission of Inquiry as to the events at Dinant states that the fanaticism of the civilian population was exhibited in a revolting manner; soldiers were murdered in their sleep, dead bodies were profaned, wounded prisoners were first bound with wire and then burned alive (p. 122). This indictment is supported by the depositions given in App. C 56, 59, 61, 67, and 73 to 78. It appears to refer to a large number of different acts. But as a fact, all these depositions, it seems, merely refer to a Saxon Jäger found burned close to Dinant, near the Sorinnes road, and, perhaps, to another who met a similar fate, to one Fusilier who had his eyes gouged out, and, in addition, to some German soldiers found dead in a house at Dinant.

A. The Burnt Saxon Jäger.

The different observations seem all, or nearly all, to have been made on the 23rd August near the road from Dinant to Sorinnes, not far from a place where a first aid station (*Verbandplatz*) had been established in an isolated property, which is passed on the way to Dinant.‡ Seven of the witnesses, including Dr. Holey (App. C 74) belong to the 108th Fusilier Regiment, another to the 12th Field Artillery Regiment, which had jointly established this post, and the ninth witness, Dr. Köckeritz, seems to have been attached to the ambulance.

The atrocities of this kind alleged against the people of Dinant and neighbourhood are thus reduced to the case of a single soldier treated inhumanly by an isolated group; there may have been another similar case, but this is very doubtful, as only one of the nine witnesses speaks of a second soldier having been burned, and he again, when giving evidence on the 6th March, 1915, relied on hearsay (App. C 59).

Except one deposition, which is undated, and the date of which cannot be deduced, the evidence was taken in February and March, 1915, that is about six months after the event. It seems strange that the abominable and quite exceptional act or acts in question are not apparently mentioned in the War Journal of any of the numerous regiments at Dinant at the time when the soldier or soldiers were found burned. There is only the recollection of soldiers, whose experiences of six months' warfare are well calculated to impair their accuracy. It would have been interesting to learn what the inhabitants of the property near which the burned soldier was lying knew about the affair. The "White Book" is quite silent on this point.

However this may be, the observations made by the various witnesses are very divergent. One says that only the victim's feet were bound by wire (App. C 56), whilst others noticed that both his feet and hands were thus bound together (App. C 75 and 76), and yet another had observed nothing as to this (App. C 77). One saw the soldier lying on his back with his arms outstretched (App. C 61), whilst another noticed that his feet and hands were bound to a stake driven into the ground (App. C 74), and a third that he was tied to the grating of a furnace (App. C 67);§ one thought that he had probably been shot (*abgeschossen*) (App. C 67), whilst another thought from the marks that he had been burned alive (App. C 74). One witness saw the body under a heap of burnt straw (App. C 59), whilst another declares that he

* *Die Einfriedungsmauern dieses Gebäudes hatten Schiessscharten.*

† See Mgr. Heylen's Note (p. 342).

‡ Dr. Köckeritz is no doubt mistaken in placing the ambulance to the west of Dinant (App. C 59, 67, and 76).

§ This witness says that the victim was a cavalryman.

and his comrades threw straw over the body to cover it (App. C. 76). Some say that the body was almost entirely consumed (App. C 74 and 75), whilst another that only the face was burned (App. C 77).

Lastly, one witness states, as has been mentioned above, that he saw one Jäger who had been burned, and had heard that another had been found near Dinant with his face burned (App. C 59).

B. The Fusilier with Eyes Gouged Out.

One witness says that on the 23rd, the day of the principal engagement, he saw, behind the position of the 2nd Section of the 12th Field Artillery Regiment, the body of a Fusilier whose eyes had been gouged out (App. C 78). One may remark that this witness, Captain Franz von Lippe, is the only *officer* of the German Army who gives evidence in the "White Book" that he saw a soldier with his eyes gouged out. None of the eight other witnesses, mentioned above, noticed anything of the sort, nor did any other soldier of the 12th Army Corps concentrated near Dinant.

C. The Officer and Soldiers Killed while Asleep.

The only deposition as to this is in App. C 73.

On the afternoon of the 25th August Emil Erwin Müller, a Reservist of the 2nd Company of the 12th Engineer Battalion (Field Pioneers), found in a house at Dinant an officer lying dead on the floor with a sofa cushion under his head, while three dead soldiers lay at his side. In the next room there were a non-commissioned officer and five men, also dead. The rifles were in a corner.

All these dead men struck the imagination of the witness ; he had the *impression* that they were all killed in their sleep. He bases this impression on the fact that they each had a cushion, a haversack or a blanket under their heads. As if, when one is wounded and seeking a restful position, it is not quite the most natural thing to place under one's head some object, if possible a soft one ! These are the only facts which led this soldier, who was accompanied by a non-commissioned officer and another man, to believe that his comrades were murdered in their sleep. Is it not unheard of that accusations so grave should be based on proofs so unconvincing and irrelevant ? When the circumstances are examined, one arrives at the conclusion, not merely that the accusation is improbable, but that it is quite impossible. The facts were observed on the afternoon of the 25th August, that is, after, according to the German version, terrible street fighting had occurred at Dinant in which the whole fanatical population had joined ; cannon had had to be turned on to the town, which had to be set on fire because *francs-tireurs* were impeding the forward march of the infantry (App. C 19). Under these circumstances, or immediately after these events, it was that eight men, a non-commissioned officer and an officer went to sleep in two rooms, surrounded by hostile and suspected civilians, without even taking the precaution to put one of their number on guard while the others slept.

Two of the men had their trousers unbuttoned, showing wounds in the pit of their stomachs. The wound of one seemed to have been caused by a pointed or cutting instrument, the other had a bullet wound in the stomach and a cut on the throat. The other soldiers had only bullet wounds, and their clothes were not disarranged. Müller, therefore, comes to the conclusion that they were all attacked by civilians while they were asleep. Would not these soldiers have waked up while the pretended assassins were opening their breeches and would they not have struggled ? Were they not awakened by the noise of the shots fired at the other soldiers in the room ? Surely, all this enterprise, evidently undertaken by several persons, could not have been effected without some noise and without some reason to fear that an alarm would be given by one or other of the soldiers !

In this deposition one can see the work of imaginations tortured to justify the acts of the German troops. The facts can be explained without incriminating the civilian population. In the course of the fighting at Dinant men were wounded ; they sought a refuge in the houses and settled there as best they could. They found cushions and blankets to put under their heads, and used their haversacks for the same purpose. A white sheet had even been laid over the officer's head and chest. Was that the act of assassins in a hurry to be off ?

Reservist Müller also noticed several bodies of civilians lying in the road in front of the house. Is there anything wonderful in that, seeing that there were such corpses in every street in Dinant ? If it is meant by this to insinuate that these civilians were the assassins of the soldiers found dead inside the house and that they

had been punished by the German troops, it would have been better to have produced depositions from those who were the instruments of justice. Certainly, the authorities would not have failed to do so, having regard to the extreme gravity of the offence, if such had really been the case. What is the object of formulating this vile insinuation?

Number of Victims of the "Civilians' Warfare" (Volkskampf) at Dinant.—According to the "White Book" the fighting at Dinant was terrible. From all the dwelling houses, and even from the Cathedral tower, a fire was directed at the troops so murderous that it was necessary to use artillery to end it (App. C 12); for instance, two artillery trains were brought into play at Herbuchenne (App. C 19 and 20).

There must have been a large number of men wounded in the street fighting, the more so as it is alleged that Belgian soldiers in civilian clothes had joined the *francs-tireurs*.

According to the Report of the Military Commission, the 178th Regiment on the 23rd August—the day of a general action—engaged in fighting, which resulted in heavy losses (*verlustrreich*), with the people of Leffe (p. 119). App. C 25 and 26, which are cited to support this statement, do not, however, do so; no doubt there is a question of seven men killed and a fair number of wounded, but chiefly of many executions and shootings of civilians. App. C 30 and 58 also mention the same seven men killed.

How many German soldiers were wounded at Dinant? Dr. Lange states that at 11 p.m. on the 23rd August the number of German soldiers in the dressing station of the 2nd Army Medical Company was about 80. Was this, apart from the dead, the formidable hecatomb of victims of attacks by *francs-tireurs*, so terrible that for several days they held a whole Army Corps at bay and rendered it necessary to bombard an open town? Such a supposition would be incorrect, for Dr. Lange does not state that the 80 wounded men were all victims of the *francs-tireurs*, nor does such a conclusion follow from the wording of his declaration (App. C 71).

In the 116 pages of the "White Book" dealing with Dinant there is no total given, not even an approximate one, of the number of German soldiers killed at Dinant. Nor is there any as to the number of civilians massacred* or houses burned. The Report of the Military Commission of Inquiry merely says that a great part of the town was burned and destroyed and that many human lives were lost. As has already been stated above, Major Schlick, the author of the account of the frightful street and house-to-house fighting at Les Rivages, does not mention that any German soldier was either killed or wounded during that fighting (App. C 44). The Report of the Military Commission of Inquiry which alludes to the same fighting (p. 121) is equally discreet. As to Captain Ermisch, who declares that in consequence of firing by inhabitants at this place the order was given to shoot the hostages, he also does not mention whether any German soldiers were hit by the bullets of the *francs-tireurs* (App. C 46).

* * *

The Mentality of the Leaders.—The mentality of the German military leaders who ordered the fires and massacres of Dinant will remain an insoluble mystery for any person who believes in the moral obligations of mankind.

Lieutenant-Colonel Count Kielmansegg says plainly that, in accordance with orders received, he had about 100 male inhabitants shot; his deposition does not contain a single word of regret (App. C 7). Nowhere in any deposition, indeed, is there a word which shows that the witnesses felt any repugnance before proceeding to the executions, nor any feeling of compassion whatever for the innocent who suffered with the "guilty." It seems that the task entrusted to them was an entirely natural one or a matter of indifference to them.

The Report on the events of Dinant drawn up by the Military Commission of Inquiry limits itself to a cold declaration (p. 124) that "no doubt it is very regrettable that, as a result of the events of the 23rd and 24th August, the flourishing town of Dinant with its suburbs was for the most part burned down and destroyed and that a great many human lives were lost. If the inhabitants had refrained from committing hostile acts, they would have suffered hardly at all in spite of their exposed situation."

* Major Fränzel writes in his report, dated 14th February, 1915, that he is unable to state the number of civilians shot during the fighting in the streets of Leffe on the 23rd August (App. C 25). There is a similar statement in his deposition of the 17th December, 1914 (App. C 30).

That the persons responsible for the massacres, in spite of their preconceived notions, have some doubt whether the victims did not include many poor creatures whose guilt could not have been proved at a trial before a Court Martial is expressly acknowledged in two places by the Report of the Military Commission in the passage cited above (p. 218). "This alone (*ohne weiteres*)," says the Report, "is sufficient justification for the bombardment of the town . . . the burning of houses occupied by *francs-tireurs*, and the shooting of inhabitants taken with weapons in their hands." "Alone," that is, without troubling to make any preliminary inquiry. It does not shrink also from declaring the shooting of hostages which occurred in several parts of the town to be "in accordance with the law," alleging military reasons; it even finds in this execution, not an excuse, but a supplementary "justification," by remarking that it would have been difficult to find innocent persons "having regard to the general participation of the people in the fighting" (p. 123).

Captain Wilke (App. C 26, pp. 158-159) states that he acted on the orders, repeated formally *three times*, of his superiors, the Major, the Brigade Commander and the Divisional Commander, who all three impressed on him (*einschärften*) successively the order to act without mercy (*rücksichtslos*). The last, Edler von der Planitz, even strongly accentuated this injunction, ordering him "to act with the utmost rigour and energy against the fanatical *francs-tireurs*" (*mit der grössten Rücksichtslosigkeit und den energischsten Mitteln*). Wilke deemed that his task was done when about fifty men had been shot.

Count Kielmansegg, who, we have seen, caused 100 civilians to be shot, nevertheless declares formally that "no transgressions of the orders which he gave were in any way reported to him."

The "White Book" does not contain a word as to the general pillage nor as to the burning, house by house, of the town of Dinant.*

* * *

Statements by German Prisoners.—German prisoners, examined in France, have revealed some of the devices to which the officers had recourse in order to rouse the fury of the troops against the people of Dinant, and have made known the orders given and the means adopted. Some of these examinations are reproduced at pp. 175 *et seq.* of this volume.

It is sufficient for the present to cite the following:—

"Certainly I did not myself see the atrocities about which I am telling you, they were described to us by our officers to incite us to distrust the inhabitants." (Alfred Jäger, private in the 3rd Company of the 103rd Infantry Regiment, see p. 193).

"On the 22nd August the Lieutenant-Colonel of our Regiment had brought in front of our regiment a carriage, in which he told us there were two German Sisters whose hands had been cut off by civilians. I must confess that I saw the carriage, but I did not see the Sisters nor the cut-off hands." (Alfred Delling, private in the 11th Company of the 103rd Infantry Regiment, see p. 198.)

"We were ordered to be on our guard, as the 1st Company of the 1st Battalion had been attacked, and the captain wounded by a girl. Our captain told us this." (Paul Jahn, non-commissioned officer in the 100th Infantry Regiment; see also the evidence of Max Brendel, private in the same Regiment, see pp. 192 and 201.)

"On the formal orders of General von Elsa, who had said that every time anyone was suspected of firing at us we ought to shoot him and burn his house, we went as if to parade under the orders of and led by our officers and non-commissioned officers." (Arthur Dietrich, private in the 12th Company of the 108th Infantry Regiment, see p. 199.)

"I ought to add that the civilians whom I spoke of were killed in the Square by a machine gun." (Rudolf Grimmer, private in the 1st Company of the 108th Infantry Regiment, see p. 176.)

"I know that women and children were taken from the civilian population of Dinant by my own regiment and the 182nd, and placed before them during the fighting that followed; these hostages fell under the fire of the French. My company did not do this." (Johannes Peisker, non-commissioned officer in the 108th Infantry Regiment, p. 177).

"Our captain told us officially that because of the cruelties inflicted on the German troops all those at whose houses arms were found were to be shot without mercy by order of the Kaiser." (Willy Materne, p. 188.)

* See on this M. Tschoffen's, the Public Prosecutor's, Report, p. 143.

“I do not believe that any civilians fired at our troops at Dinant, but believe it was regulars. I found some corpses of French soldiers in the streets.” (Emil Arnold, private in the 2nd Company of the 108th Infantry Regiment, see p. 202.)

The accusations formulated against the proceedings of the German armies could not receive more overwhelming confirmation.*

SECTION III.

DOCUMENTS.†

A. *Information given by the French Military Authorities on the Subject of the Operations round Dinant in August, 1914.‡*

I.—*Operations round Dinant up to 15th August, 1914.*

The French troops sent to the region of Dinant had as their mission “to prevent the enemy gaining access to the left bank of the river above Namur, while refraining from action on the right bank.”

The French Command was, however, forced by circumstances to throw some part of its forces on to the right bank.

Thus, Hastière-par-delà, situated on the right bank of the Meuse, south of Dinant, was held continuously from the 15th to the 23rd August, 1914, by French troops (a company of the 384th Regiment).

Anseremme, immediately south of Dinant, was attacked on the 15th August at the same time as Dinant, but the Germans did not cross the Meuse, and contented themselves with driving back the French advanced guards. After mid-day on the 15th the French occupation was here limited to the defence of the immediate approaches of the bridge and railway station.

On the side of the French the situation at Dinant at 6 o'clock on the 15th August, the day when the Germans attacked, was as follows: Half a battalion of the 148th Regiment, one battalion of the 33rd and a machine gun section held, on the right bank, the citadel (two companies) and, by simple detached posts, the roads out of Dinant towards the suburbs of St. Nicholas and Leffe. The main body of the infantry was on the left bank along the canal and near the cemetery.

On the morning of the 15th, the detachment of the 33rd in the citadel of Dinant was attacked, and the whole detachment retired to the left bank by mid-day. Parts of two battalions of Saxon Jägers followed them over the bridge of Dinant.

There remained on the right bank two sections of the 148th only, and they, being cut off in the suburbs of Leffe and St. Nicholas, did not recross the river until night, by which time the enemy had been driven out of the town by a counter-attack.

That afternoon the 8th and 73rd Infantry had by a vigorous counter-attack driven the Saxons back to the right bank and had re-occupied the citadel (about 5 p.m.). A squadron of the 6th (mounted) Chasseurs even followed the Germans in their retreat on the right bank.

The 8th and 73rd, after clearing the Germans out of the town, retired during the night to the left bank, and contented themselves with occupying the bridge and the houses along this bank.

On that day, therefore, the operations on the right bank were the defence of the above mentioned positions in front of Hastière-par-delà, Anseremme and Dinant, and the sending out of infantry and cavalry reconnoitring detachments and patrols.

* See in particular as to the execution and murder of civilians, depositions Nos. 1 (i), 5, 10, 12, 27 and 29; as to arson, Nos. 1 (ii), 2, 3, 8, 9, 24, 25, 27 and 28; as to pillage, Nos. 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16, 27 and 28 (pp. 175 to 203).

† The Report of the Public Prosecutor of Dinant, reproduced at pp. 142 *et seq.*, is a detailed narration of the facts. It is the result of the personal investigations of this magistrate and of inquiries which he made in Belgium. It is corroborated by the Note of Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur (p. 337).

The publication of the evidence collected by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry would seem, therefore, superfluous. But it is interesting to reproduce a series of documents emanating from the French military authorities on the subject of the operations near Dinant in August, 1914, and the evidence of German prisoners belonging to the Army Corps which destroyed the town of Dinant.

‡ The defence of Dinant was undertaken by the French troops.

II.—*Defence Measures after 15th August, 1914.*

After this time the French no longer held Dinant on the right bank in permanent force, but merely sent out patrols and small reconnoitring detachments.

The French at once undertook measures for defence against the anticipated counter-attack of the Germans.

After the 16th August, it was the French army that organised Dinant on the left bank for defence, in particular by the riverside.

The *bridge* itself was closed by wire entanglements; barricades were built in the streets running down to the Meuse, and the railway station and the level crossing on the Dinant-Onhaye main road were organised for defence.

The Hôtel de la Poste and the houses built along the Meuse were loopholed so as to cover the banks of the river, particularly the bridge and its approaches.

On the *right bank*, the French confined themselves to building a few barricades of paving stones and a few wire barriers in front of the bridge piles and near the church.

At Anseremme, before the evacuation of the right bank, which took place on the 15th, the French had dug a few trenches and built some barriers across the approaches to the bridge.

At Hastière, the preparations on the right bank included holes dug across the roads and ways coming from the east, some abattis and some wire entanglements; two machine guns were placed on the abutments of the bridge on the left bank.

North of Dinant, at Bouvignes, the defence had works only on the left bank; only the abutments of the bridge on the *right bank* were, as at Dinant, protected by wire entanglements.

At Houx, on the *right bank*, the Belgian engineers had constructed abattis on the hill east of the village.

III.—*Résumé of the Operations after the 15th August, 1914.*

From the 15th to the 22nd there were only insignificant skirmishes. On the 22nd August the 51st Reserve Division relieved the 1st Army Corps in its task of acting as a covering force on the Meuse.

On the 23rd it was vigorously attacked by the 12th Saxon Army Corps, some units of which had crossed to the left bank above Dinant and reached Onhaye.

They were vigorously counter-attacked in the evening by the reserves of the 1st Army Corps and driven into the Meuse.

During the night of the 23rd August the 1st Army Corps and the units attached to it had to retire southwards, in obedience to army orders caused by events which had occurred further West.

IV.—*Detailed Information as to the Operations from the 22nd to the 24th August, 1914.*

Hastière. At daybreak, on the 23rd, two and a half sections of the 348th were defending the village of Hastière-par-delà (right bank), but by 4.30 a.m. had fallen back to the left bank.

The defence of Hastière-Lavaux, on the left bank, was entrusted to a company of the 208th, supported by a machine gun section. The company was also to ensure the destruction of the bridge in certain events, which occurred at 10 a.m. At 1 p.m., under the protection of some units of the 348th Regiment, it retired to a position on the wooded slopes to the east of Insemont where the resistance was prolonged until 8 p.m.

North of Hastière, the Germans had in the morning begun to cross the Meuse near Waulsort in small numbers, driving back two sections of the 208th, the one posted at Waulsort and the other at the neighbouring lock.

Anseremme. About 6 p.m. on the 22nd the French Engineers blew up the bridge at Anseremme, but the destruction was not complete, and the Germans were able on the morning of the 23rd to pass some infantry over to the left bank. Anseremme was defended by a company of the 208th, who, seeing themselves outflanked, evacuated the place about 3.30 p.m.

Dinant. After the 16th the part of the town built on the *right bank* was merely patrolled by the French. On the 22nd, however, Lefie was the scene of a minor operation carried out by a detachment of French Engineers under the cover of a section of the 273rd: a house, opposite Rue St. Jacques, which prevented the French machine guns from enfilading this street, by which the Germans had to debouch on their way from the citadel, was blown up by this detachment about 1 p.m.

On the 24th there were no longer any French troops in the Meuse Valley below Hastière.

V.—Supplementary Information as to the Conduct of the Germans and the Attitude of Belgian Civilians.

Between the 15th and 23rd August, apart from the attack on Dinant and Anseremme on the 15th, the Germans contented themselves with crowning the crests on the right bank.

At night they sent out reconnaissances to the crossings; detachments came into the groups of houses in the valley, in particular at Dinant, Leffe and Houx. Some of these detachments were in motors with machine guns.

During the night of the 16th the Germans sacked Houx, and during the two nights following they burned the village; three of the principal inhabitants were hanged in the basement of one of the largest houses.

Deposition of the French Engineer Captain, detailed to remain at Dinant Bridge to blow it up when the order was given.

The Germans came several times to Dinant (right bank) to requisition flour and provisions. They got drunk and ill-treated the inhabitants. (One woman, who crossed to the left bank to buy flour, said that the Germans had seized her husband as hostage and would shoot him if she did not bring back the flour demanded.)

During the night of the 21st, a small force of infantry and pioneers, in motors armed with machine guns, came along Rue St. Jacques, firing at the inhabitants who appeared at their windows, systematically aiming at the first floor of the houses, and thereby killing several persons, including a butcher.

During this exploit the Germans got drunk and fought one another. Next morning, there were found in the street two non-commissioned officers' helmets bespattered with cerebral matter, some pamphlets on the technical training of pioneers, incendiary bombs and explosive bombs.

These detachments retired rapidly before our patrols and showed no fight.

At Hastière, after the evacuation of the village on the right bank by the French on the morning of the 23rd, the Germans set nearly all the houses on fire by means of incendiary grenades. Some of the inhabitants were burned alive and many others shot. Loud cries of children and women were heard during the night by the men defending the left bank.

At the moment when the order was given to blow up the bridge, the Germans were preparing to cross, driving some inhabitants in front of them.

Nowhere did the inhabitants take any part with the French troops in the defence.

Even the Civic Guards took no part in the fighting. One regiment only notes that at Hastière bridge, but only during the first days, two unarmed Civic Guards were added to the guards at the end of the bridge to identify the inhabitants who asked to be allowed to cross.

Deposition of the General Commanding the 5th French Army.

Having been on the Meuse, at the head of the 1st Army Corps, from the 11th to the 26th August I can make the general statement that I never saw or heard of Belgian civilians assisting in the defence of their country.

In the district where the 1st Army Corps was, the Civic Guards, though regularly organised and provided with uniforms, never took part in the fighting, and I had to take special measures to free my men from the numerous sightseers who, from the 15th to the 20th August, came on bicycles to see the French fight on the Meuse.

B. Inquiry made by the French Military Authorities among German prisoners belonging to the 12th Army Corps (1st Saxon Corps) as to the crimes committed at Dinant by this Corps.

The town of Dinant was, at the end of August, 1914, sacked by the 12th German Army Corps (1st Saxon Corps) under the command of Cavalry General von Elsa.

Nearly 1,100 men of the 100th, 101st, 102nd, 103rd, 177th, 178th, and 182nd Infantry Regiments, 102nd and 103rd Reserve Regiments, 11th, 12th and 13th Battalions of Foot Jägers, and the 1st Engineers Battalion, which units constituted the 12th Army Corps, were taken prisoners by the French Army, most of them during the Battle of the Marne.

They were examined on oath by members of the military tribunals. Their depositions form a voluminous *dossier*; they are interesting, as they clearly show the system of terrorisation which governed the systematically thought-out devastation of the places where the German armies met with military resistance, and also the massacres of civilians which took place there.

Four hundred and fourteen of these prisoners were examined by Lieutenant Loustalot, Deputy Prosecuting Counsel of the Court Martial of Bordeaux. M. Loustalot, when sending the transcription of the depositions to the Minister of War, set out his conclusions in a very complete report.

Here are the chief passages, followed by some of the statements taken by Lieutenant Loustalot* and by some of his colleagues.

I.—REPORT ON THE INQUIRY HELD IN PURSUANCE OF THE MINISTER'S CIRCULAR OF 9TH APRIL, 1915, IN THE PRISONERS OF WAR DÉPÔTS OF THE 18TH DISTRICT, ON THE ATROCITIES COMMITTED BY THE 12TH SAXON CORPS, BY LIEUTENANT LOUSTALOT, DEPUTY PROSECUTOR OF THE COURT MARTIAL OF BORDEAUX, AND SERGEANT LABORDERIE, REGISTRAR.

I have the honour to send you herewith the transcript of the 414 statements of prisoners of war, which I have taken in the various dépôts in the 18th District, on the atrocities committed by the 12th Saxon Corps.

I have thought it best to arrange them by regiments, and in each regiment by companies, so as to facilitate the study of the facts and the conduct of each unit, and when possible to enable the responsibility incurred by the command of each unit to be ascertained. . . .

To facilitate the investigation I have thought it best to adopt a uniform system throughout. Above all, it seemed to me that my first care must be to keep separate as much as possible the men to be examined, as is recommended by the Circular, so as to avoid replies being agreed upon. . . .

Under these conditions I had to appeal to the sincerity and good faith of the Saxons who were the subject of this inquiry. The results, though satisfactory, might have been better. It is clear that there is too much reticence in the statements obtained. There has been a great deal of variation due to erasures and additions in some of the statements and the refusal of witnesses to sign. In fact, in many cases the uneasiness of an accomplice who is afraid that he may accuse himself and that he has said too much is evident. Lastly, in many cases again the influence of the non-commissioned officer over his men, which still exists after more than eight months of imprisonment, is traced in the watchword of silence. "It is by speaking too freely that one gets oneself into a fortress," objected one of them (Zimmermann, 108th Regiment, 3rd Company, Statement No. 252). "By signing my name to this deposition in an enemy country, I am running the risk of being court-martialled on my return home," declared several others (Statement No. 281).

Nevertheless, with this reservation, the statements enable one to answer fairly satisfactorily the questions which this inquiry was intended to elucidate. By getting each man to explain for himself, if need be by the help of a map, the part that he took in the war from the day that he left the garrison until the day he was made prisoner, I have been able to obtain, not a view of the main points of the campaign according to German ideas—which matters very little to us—but a vast number of details, the grouping of which throws a flood of light on the whole of the barbarities of the German Army during this period.

As to the 12th Saxon Corps, which was the sole object of our investigations, the culminating point was Dinant, a vision of horror which terrified some of the invaders themselves.

THE ATROCITIES OF DINANT.

Many tongues have been loosed on the atrocities committed at Dinant. Though none would consent to accept any part but that of an unimportant onlooker, yet all agreed in acknowledging that, after the 23rd August, the town was simply an enormous brazier, which shone over the whole district and lit up the march of the troops in the middle of the night. On the following days entire districts continued to burn, and Private Degelmann, of the 13th Jäger Battalion, tells us that there

* In the course of his report M. Loustalot refers to a great many of the statements. It is not possible to print them all. The names mentioned in the report of the persons making statements which are reprinted in this volume are in italics.

were many houses still burning at the end of August (Statement No. 335). "The stench from this enormous charnel-house was unbreathable," says Private Baumann (Statement No. 328), "and we had to hasten our march, but not without noticing many corpses lying on the ground." In fact, the most striking feature of this sad picture is, not so much the pillage and destruction of a town given up to sack, as the hecatomb of inhabitants of all ages (old men, women and children), whose bodies lay thick on the ground, some killed by the bombardment, but many more shot dead by the infuriated soldiery.

As to the number put to death, opinions differ according to the days, and the districts which one or the other went through, and also according to the candour of the men examined. But it is clear that the corpses were mostly *in heaps* along and at the corners of the streets, and that they were particularly numerous at certain places, for instance, along the Meuse and near the cliff that overhangs the town.

What is most striking is the savagery displayed towards the feeble, defenceless people who were among the first victims. Thus one Kiesslich of the 178th (Statement No. 297) told us that he had heard that many civilians, men, women and children, had been shot. Patzscke, of the 182nd, 2nd Company (Statement No. 333), saw many corpses in the streets, including several women, whose bodies were reduced to ashes. Müller, of the 182nd, 12th Company (Statement No. 366), says that he saw heaps of corpses in the streets. Schilian, of the 100th (Statement No. 8) saw about thirty bodies of civilians near the Rocher. Wolland, of the 100th (Statement No. 21), saw the corpses of 25 women and children at the same place. Grosse,* of the 177th (Statement No. 280), says that on the 24th he saw near the great rock, which still haunts Teutonic imaginations, heaps of corpses in which he discerned piled up in confusion the bodies of soldiers, civilians, women and children, who had all been shot. A non-commissioned officer named Adler, of the 101st (Statement No. 51), says that he himself saw 200 to 300 corpses of men, women and children heaped together along a wall. Lehmann,† of the 103rd (Statement No. 186) declares that he saw in the church square about 200 bodies, but, as it was dark, and probably also because details might embarrass him, he says that he could not tell whether there were women or children among them. Guslet, of the 108th (Statement No. 254), while the town was in flames, saw in the streets about 100 corpses of civilians, some of them by themselves, others in heaps of about ten; from their wounds they appeared to have been shot.

At Leffe (a suburb of Dinant) a large number of soldiers also saw hundreds of corpses. See the depositions of Hanse, of the 178th (Statement No. 320), Arnold,‡ of the 108th (Statement No. 243), Mader, of the 108th (Statement No. 245), Kaden, of the 100th (Statement No. 44), Kressle, of the 108th (Statement No. 269), (children and old men killed), Henrich, of the 108th (Statement No. 271), who says that on the 27th August there were still corpses in the streets and 200 or 300 civilians were still held as prisoners in the town; and Winck (Statement No. 21), etc.

We will close our enumeration at this point; it might be made much longer, but it is already convincing enough. From all these accounts it is clear that the town was delivered up to fire and sword. The better to ensure this, the authorities went to the length of telling the men that the people were shooting at the troops and cutting off the ears of the wounded. (Statement No. 367, Statement of Erlneier, 182nd Regiment, 10th Company.) . . .

Now upon which Corps does the responsibility for these unspeakable atrocities rest? Each defends himself from the charge of being concerned, but a comparison of the depositions taken permits of an almost absolute identification.

The 178th, as has already been stated, seems to have taken the leading part in these atrocities. We find the 2nd Company (Captain Weiss) taking part in an execution on the 23rd August (Kiesslich of the 178th, Statement No. 298); the 3rd Company (Captain Heidrich) and the 11th Company (Captain Franz), (Statement No. 320, Hauf of the 178th, and Statement No. 323, Cadet von Unlaub), who in the presence of the witness Hanse of the 178th (whose deposition is No. 320 above cited), shot about twenty inhabitants in the suburb of Leffe, who were piled up in a heap near the bridge over the Meuse. Several depositions (such as No. 321) also relate to arson and pillage committed outside Dinant by the 2nd Battalion of this regiment.

Immediately after the 178th, a special place is due to the 182nd Guards Regiment. At the earliest moment an order was issued to this regiment to collect the

* See p. 195.

† See p. 191.

‡ See p. 202.

inhabitants without distinction of age or sex and send them to the rear (Berthel, of the 182nd, Statement No. 332; Brunner, Statement No. 336), and we know what that means. Brunner, on his side, has told us quite coolly how they broke open the doors of houses with the butt-ends of their rifles, how they dragged out men, women and children, though as a rule these offered no resistance, and how they afterwards handed them over to the Grenadiers. . . . "I don't know if they were shot," he adds, "for my part, I did not hear any volley fired." The 2nd Company, under Captain Kuntze, seems to deserve special mention in this connection. (See Statements Nos. 338, 339, 340, also Statement No. 387, on the barbarous execution of an inhabitant by Colonel Francke.)

The 100th Regiment of Grenadiers, which was also at Dinant when these revolting scenes took place, must be that famous regiment of grenadiers referred to by one Pahelke (Statement No. 333), when he says: "The Grenadiers had passed," and also by the above-mentioned Brunner, when he says that persons were handed over to the Grenadiers. Indeed, the non-commissioned Officer *Jahn*,* of the 12th Company (Statement 41), declares: "Our regiment received orders to collect all the people together and bring them into some houses on the bank of the Meuse, near the Grand Rocher; there were many women and children among them. They kept on arriving in groups every minute, about 200 persons in all arrived at the convent." And a little further on: "Our captain had ordered us to be on our guard, for the 1st Company had been attacked, and the captain had been wounded by a young girl of fourteen." He further mentions, in passing, that he saw corpses of civilians pell-mell with wounded soldiers, heaped up against the walls.

The 108th Regiment is perhaps pre-eminent among those units whose ferocity throughout the campaign has been most clearly established. . . .

The 102nd Regiment of the Saxon Guard was also at Dinant (see for its participation in the atrocities Statement No. 87, by non-commissioned officer Kramspe, of the 102nd, No. 93 by Fröde, of the 102nd, and No. 121 by Techler, who acknowledges that by order of Captain Krüll, of the 6th Company, the soldiers entered the houses and shot the inhabitants suspected of hostility).

Nevertheless, its share in the cruelties already noted seems from the evidence collected during our inquiry to have been less than that of the preceding units.

The 103rd Regiment was also at Dinant, and also took part in the savage acts of the Saxon soldiery (Statement No. 170, by Specht, of the 103rd, 4th Company; Statement No. 186, by *Lehmann*,† of the 103rd, 7th Company; Statement No. 187, by Sturm, of the 103rd, 7th Company, this last relating especially to the proceedings of the 6th Company, outside Dinant; Statement No. 213, by Delluy, of the 108th, 11th Company).

The 177th Infantry Regiment appears to have played a very minor part at Dinant, where it seems only to have passed through, at least if we can believe the statements made by the Saxons who were interrogated, and who, indeed, belonged, for the most part, to the Reserve Corps.

The 101st Regiment of Saxon Grenadiers was also at Dinant on the evening of August 23rd, and it seems to have taken an active part in the dreadful incidents that occurred there (see the deposition by *Schönherr*,‡ of the 101st, 4th Company, Statement No. 49; and the deposition by Rossberg, of the 101st, 3rd Company, Statement No. 50, on the subject of the corpses of women and children lying in heaps, or scattered along the streets, and on the subject of the siege of a house, the inhabitants of which were to be executed). See also the deposition of the non-commissioned officer Adler, Statement No. 51, already quoted; that of Schäffer (Statement No. 56) on the subject of the sack of the town and various executions of men and women; the deposition of Heberlein (Statement No. 76), which describes the execution of three civilians; and that of *Meissner*§ (Statement No. 77), on the subject of the execution or arrest of various inhabitants, men, women and children.

The 12th Battalion of Foot Jägers was among the vanguard troops, as they were within sight of Dinant on August 15th; but they do not seem to have taken part in the dreadful events of August 23rd and 24th. (See as to their activities during the campaign Statement No. 389, Hakenbrück; Statement No. 394; Statement No. 396 of Private Mühle, on the subject of the execution of civilians

* See p. 192.

† See p. 191.

‡ See pp. 157 and 183.

§ See p. 190.

carried out by the Reserve Battalion of the 12th Jägers, which started rather late from Freiburg.

* * *

But though Dinant remains the eternal monument of Saxon barbarity, it would be illusory to believe that outside Dinant this cruelty was not manifested with equal intensity. There are numerous declarations to show that the road taken by the XIIth Corps, from the frontier of Luxemburg to the Marne, and especially up to the French frontier, was marked by the corpses of inhabitants, by devastated villages and burnt houses (see Statement No. 404, Lankisch, 13th Battalion of Jägers, etc.). With the exception of certain individuals belonging to crack regiments whose participation in these crimes is only too patent, all the men interrogated admit that the villages were burnt entirely, so to speak. The only difference between these declarations is that the men belonging to the Reserves assert that everything was already destroyed, annihilated, and in ashes when they passed (see Böhme, of the 103rd, Statement No. 230), whereas the men of the active corps admit that the villages were blazing when they passed through them. "Some comrades of the active corps told me," said Böhme, "that a general, whose name ends in *ki*, had ordered the troops who preceded us to 'make a clean sweep of everything. . . . I may add that the active corps had passed that way; we saw as we went by that they had done their work well.'" (Statement No. 230, Id. Jensch, of the 182nd Regiment; Statement No. 330: "The Pioneers had passed through . . . everything was burnt.")

True, some of the Saxons interrogated try to refer this systematic destruction of a hitherto flourishing region to the effects of the bombardment; others, overcome by the evidence, confess that the fires were generally kindled by the Pioneers with their special apparatus (in those round or square boxes described by Pollner, Statement No. 202; Weigelt, Statement No. 385; *Dittrich*,* Statement No. 2), or, again, by the artillery which accompanied each unit, and took up its position to destroy the villages directly a shot was heard in the neighbourhood. From time to time the infantry itself undertook to kindle fires with such combustibles as they found on the spot, piling up the furniture in the centre of a room (see Statement No. 56, Schäffer; Statement No. 389, Hakenbrück; Statement No. 62, Müller).

Finally, it would certainly seem, if we can believe the declarations of one Gretschel (Statement No. 394), that the first crimes must be attributed to the cavalry patrols, which as early as the beginning of the month of August began to notify their appearance by dealing death and destruction around them.

Gretschel, indeed, belongs to the 12th Battalion of Jägers, which seems to have been among the first troops which invaded Belgium, since this battalion was already just below Dinant on August 15th. Now on this very day he saw a burnt village not far from Dinant; according to him it had been fired by the cavalry, and this cavalry was Prussian cavalry (Dragoons, Uhlans and Hussars). It is true that other Saxons interrogated blame the Bavarians, whose reputation, they say, is well known, for the worst atrocities of this campaign. The truth seems to be that there is very little to choose between them in the matter of barbarity and ferocity (see also the manner in which they behaved to mayors and hostages, Statements Nos. 328 and 332).

Throughout the march the executions of civilians increased in numbers, as also the burning and destruction of houses and villages. There are many depositions which allude to these occurrences, though nearly all in a timid and embarrassed manner, especially when women and children are in question. These inevitable reticences are especially noticeable when the witnesses have to explain what became of the inhabitants after they were arrested. When pressed, they all give the same convenient answer: they were sent to the rear, for the rearguard companies in each unit are the ones who have to carry out rigorous measures (see Biebi, 12th Jägers, Statement No. 390). Civilians were sent to them and never reappeared (Statement No. 391). Or else, they say, the inhabitants who were made prisoners were handed over to the Grenadiers; taking into account the mildness of these latter, the euphemism will deceive no one! They, too, were never seen again!

* * *

Such, in their main outlines, are the statements we have been able to gather from the lips of the invaders themselves.

* See p. 200.

Obliged to admit the reality of the atrocities committed by their troops, though they have done their best to minimise them, the intellectuals (those who have constituted themselves the champions of German culture in all the *dépôts*) have their justification ready. In every line of their depositions it reappears, always in the same form. It was the inhabitants who began. And each one quotes, amplifying or distorting them, the cases favourable to his theory, which have been reported to him, or which—in very rare instances—he himself witnessed. Both are very interesting to study, for German mentality is fully revealed in them.

In the first place, the collation of their own statements enables us of itself to establish the falsity of the system thus evolved. Indeed, I felt bound to ask each of the Saxons interrogated the same question bearing on the attitude of the Belgian population towards them, in spite of the irksomeness of this repetition; I asked each one of them in particular whether civilians had fired on his company—for this is the formation as to the life of which they are best informed—and I have recorded their answers in each one of the statements.

Now the immense majority of the men who gave evidence were obliged to admit that the inhabitants behaved in a perfectly correct manner—irreproachably, says one witness, in the beginning almost cordially. They declare it was only later, from August 22nd, onwards, as they gradually advanced towards Dinant, and more especially after the massacres of Dinant, that they found the people excited and openly hostile. It was then also that the inhabitants, seized with terror, abandoned their houses and fled in every direction, blocking the roads with their pitiful processions.

All this seems to bear little resemblance to a *levée en masse* of *francs-tireurs*; moreover, the Reserve troops, who did not pass through these same districts till a little later, confirm this impression of the resignation of the invaded regions, which sufficiently proves, if proof were needed, that the hostility alleged to have been shown by the inhabitants from the outset was nothing but a pretext designed to mask outrages coldly conceived and ferociously perpetrated.

Further, among the Saxon soldiers who persist in maintaining that the inhabitants were the aggressors, men belonging to the same regiment and the same company often give contradictory replies. Whereas some (only a small number indeed) assert that civilians fired on their company, although they are generally unable to give date and place, for they are above all anxious to avoid precision and to escape cross-examination, others declare on oath that nothing of the sort happened. The interest of the former in lying is manifest, for they are concerned to minimise their collective and often individual crimes at all costs. The second, on the other hand, have no sort of interest in speaking as they have done. They are the ones most worthy of belief; moreover, they also appear to be the ones less completely subjugated by their non-commissioned officers in the domestic life of the *dépôts*.

But in reality, save in a few exceptional cases,* the story of civilian attacks on the troops belongs to the domain of fable. It is easy to become convinced of this by reading through the statements of the Saxons who gave evidence, for nearly all of them were finally obliged to admit that they had not personally witnessed these attacks, but merely repeated rumours spread by their comrades or propagated by their officers.

It is now fully established, as a result of the present inquiry, that this false report was throughout invented by the German military authorities for a purpose that may be readily divined.

A certain Gessler, of the 178th Regiment (Statement No. 300)—who was nevertheless a schoolmaster—declares when they were in Belgian territory, they still honestly believed that Belgium was their ally. It was, therefore, imperative to excite the natural ferocity of the soldiers by arguments calculated to rouse them. Very soon rumours of the savage aggressions committed by civilians upon solitary German soldiers and stories of mutilations and tortures began to circulate in each regiment, by order. “As soon as we arrived in Belgium,” says the soldier Hakenbrück (Statement No. 389), “our commanders warned us to be on our guard, for the inhabitants had fired upon the German troops that preceded us. I must say, however, that, as far as I am concerned, no civilian ever attacked us (12th Battalion of Foot Jägers).”

Soon commanding officers did not stop here. It was reported that entire patrols had been massacred. Thus the odious fable of the mutilated patrol of Hussars recounted

* Not a single incident of the kind has been established. (See the Reports of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry and the protests of the Bishops, Appendix, Documents VI, IX and X, pp. 308, 322 and 349 [Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry]).

at second hand by one *Jäger*,* of the 103rd Infantry (Statement No. 164), passed from mouth to mouth. At this point of our summary we may be allowed to say that this invention has been absolutely annihilated by the declaration of one *Grosse*,† of the 102nd Army Medical Corps, 1st Company (Statement No. 411). This ambulance orderly, who never left the medical section of the XIIth Corps, affirms that he never tended any mutilated soldiers, and never even heard that there had been any throughout the campaign. . . .

It was under the influence of these sanguinary ideas and also of alcohol that those unspeakable atrocities were committed, as to which the Saxons who gave evidence maintained, for the most part, a discreet silence, but of which we get a terrible idea from the depositions of the two Poles, *Kurasinski*‡ and *Konieczny* (Statement No. 414). Women burnt alive, women, leading a child by the hand, shot down with revolvers by officers, women thrust through with bayonets by the *Jägers* when they attempted to fly from the furnace that was waiting to devour them, etc. It is true that in presence of these atrocities a Saxon proudly declared to us that he had helped to rescue a "German" family at Dinant about to perish in a burning house (see Statement No. 346).

Those who committed these atrocities were not, it is true, all Saxons of the XIIth Corps, but their crimes at Mons, Louvain and Herve form a worthy pendant to the massacres at Dinant, in which the 100th, 102nd, 108th, 178th and 182nd Regiments gained an infamous renown for all time.

Fortunately, although the interested parties were careful not to incriminate each other, we know by the itinerary of the troops, the order of their march, the names of the superior officers and the commanders of companies, all that is essential to fix the responsibilities that weigh upon them.

The responsibility of the commanders is, in fact, most clearly demonstrated by these declarations. Not, indeed, that any soldier or non-commissioned officer dreamt for a moment of denouncing the true authors of the crimes of which they were but the anonymous and brutal executants. It would show very little knowledge of German mentality to imagine that a single one of them, confronted with these horrors, felt any revulsion of conscience or any sentiment of revolt against officers so unworthy to be leaders. Not one among them had any thought of attacking or exposing his officer. But they very naturally excused themselves by pleading strict execution of the orders given to them in conformity with what the German considers the law of war. Indeed, a little pocket dictionary for the use of non-commissioned officers (which we took from one of them in hospital at Rochefort; see Statement No. 393), proclaims in a trenchant formula, as an argument admitting of no discussion, that every leader of a patrol is entitled to destroy a village and shoot the Mayor and the inhabitants on the pretext that there are *francs-tireurs* in the district. The non-commissioned officer draws inspiration from this, and the soldier after him.

The commanders also ordered, and even traced, with their own hands (Statement No. 328), the inscriptions chalked on the doors of houses: "Shots were fired from here." (We know what this meant for the rearguard companies or the columns that were to follow.) Or else: "To be spared; good people." These were generally Germans domiciled in the country or spies who had given information to the troops (Statements Nos. 391, 396, 401).

Another measure ordered by the chiefs was organised pillage, which they re-christened requisition. In this connection the principle was laid down in masterly fashion by officers themselves: Lieutenant Gürlitt, at Boyardville (100th Grenadiers, Statement No. 1), Von Rochow, of the 100th Grenadiers, at Aix (Statement No. 35), and the Cadet von Larisch, of the 178th Regiment (Statement No. 323). All make subtle distinctions between pillage properly so-called and requisitions under arms. According to them, only the former is reprehensible, for it is the satisfaction of individual instincts in conflict with social order; thus the pillager who leaves the ranks to sack a house with the sole object of satisfying his senses deserves punishment and will be tied to the post; but, on the other hand, the officer or the non-commissioned officer who, at the head of a few men, armed to the teeth, breaks in the doors and windows of a forsaken house (and houses were very soon all abandoned by their owners in anticipation of the fate that was in store for those who remained), using for this burglar's job the jemmy, which his men carry thrust into their belts,

* See p. 165

† See p. 91.

‡ See p. 170.

who afterwards clears off the provisions from the larder, the linen from the presses, the wine from the cellars, in short, everything he may consider necessary for his troops, and finally leaves the gutted furniture in the middle of the courtyard, with a van for the transport of valuable articles—this person will be exercising a social right in all its rigour. Lieutenant von Larisch, moreover, does not hesitate to declare deserted houses “the property of the State,” and it is in the name of the German State (that State he so nobly typifies) that he claims to confiscate the goods of the vanquished, which later he will divide among his men. Lieutenant Gürlitt, though he does not venture so far as to pronounce them State property, concurs in these opinions. He is a doctor of letters, an assistant at the University of Leipzig, the son of a learned historian. In all this he remains conscious of his origin, for it is a revival in the twentieth century of the ancient booty of his German ancestors. It is hardly astonishing that when the legitimacy of collective plunder is thus proclaimed and exalted, the soldiers should no longer trouble themselves much about the rights of property, and that a large number of depositions should prove how, from Dinant to the Marne, houses were pillaged, doors broken in, cellars plundered, and how the roads were strewn with bottles, or with various articles that provoked their greed (see Statements Nos. 382, 389, 391, 394, 331, 350, 401, 404, 406, 409, carrying off of furniture, provisions, etc.; No. 199, Futze, 103rd Regiment, 8th Company, who declares he saw a wool factory, whence the troops had brought the wool and the plant into the street, no doubt for the purpose of sending them to the rear; see further, Statements Nos. 413 and 414, where the Poles describe the orgies they witnessed).

The majority of those who make such confessions admit the extent of these robberies without any sort of shame. Indeed, are there not houses at long intervals on which is written by the hands of the chiefs themselves this paternal recommendation: *Nicht zu plündern* (Not to be plundered)? We can imagine what was the fate of those which did not bear this protective inscription.

But on this point an answer is given by all the men of the Reserve Corps. When interrogated as to whether they had seen or shared in scenes of pillage, a number of them answered with disarming candour: “It was no longer possible, the active corps had been before us.” Or again: “Everything had been cleared off, and we searched these houses with shattered doors in vain; there was nothing left to take” (Statements Nos. 363 and 383).

The secondary excuse which many of them attempt to make for their acts of pillage belongs to the same order of ideas: “We had been marching day and night like machines,” said Schuricht (Statement No. 405), “doing from 60 to 70 kilometres a day,” say others; “hence the commissariat transport had been unable to keep up with us, and in the latter part of the time, when we had been without bread for three days, and other units had had none for eleven days (see Statement No. 138, Ufer, of the 102nd Regiment, 11th Company), we were obliged to get food as best we could. In some cases numbers of us had to dig up beetroot and other vegetables in the field. Necessity has no law” (Statements Nos. 381 and 383).

It seems true, indeed, that just when the great battle of the Marne was about to take place, the German troops, exhausted by prolonged effort, were disorganised as regards the carriage of supplies from the base. Their medical and ambulance services seem likewise to have acquired an evil celebrity among their own troops at this period. We have only to turn to the complaints of prisoners still under treatment at the infirmary of Saint-Martin-de-Ré to recognise the shameless neglect of which they were the victims on the part of the staff of their ambulances, and to understand the debt of gratitude they declare they owe to the French Medical Service which saved them (Statement No. 169, Possell, of the 103rd Regiment; Statement No. 202, Pollner, of the 103rd Regiment).

Bordeaux, June 16th, 1915.

(Signed) J. LOUSTALOT,
Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecutor.

II.—STATEMENTS.

No. 1.

March 15th of the year nineteen hundred and fifteen,

We, André Robert, Inspector of Mobile Police attached to the General Control of judicial inquiry (Directory of Public Safety), Paris, Judicial Police Officer and Assistant to the Public Prosecutor of the Republic;

Acting under instructions from the Minister for War, given in Paris on the 4th of March current,

Proceeded on that day to Toulouse, where, assisted by M. Leplant, military interpreter to the 14th Regiment of Infantry, after he had solemnly sworn to translate questions and answers faithfully, we took the depositions of the German military prisoners hereafter named :—

1. Grimmer, Rudolf, born March 19th, 1893, at Potschappel (Saxony), son of the late Heinrich and Pauline Pforter; bachelor, commercial clerk :

I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. I am a private of the active army in the 108th Infantry Regiment, 1st Company, garrisoned at Dresden. I was made prisoner on September 11th at Sommepeuis, after having taken part in several fights in the north.

Interrogated : My regiment entered Dinant on August 23rd about 5 a.m.; we remained there on that Sunday until about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, at which hour my regiment took up its position on a height overlooking the town.

We had received orders to kill any civilians who fired at us, but as a fact I and the other men of my regiment fired at all the civilians we found in the houses from which it was supposed a shot had been fired; thus we killed women and even children. We did not do it wantonly, but we had been ordered to act in this way by our superior officers, and there is not a soldier in the active army who would dare to contravene an order emanating, like this, from the Higher Command. My company did not kill more than thirty civilians under the conditions I have described. My company did not receive orders to fire upon a group of civilians collected together to be shot, but on that August 23rd I saw heaped up on one side of a little square at Dinant a group of corpses, containing the bodies of about sixty civilians, among them several women and young children, who had been shot in a mass; I cannot say whether this fusillade was the work of my regiment; the 182nd Infantry Regiment and the 100th Grenadiers were at Dinant at the same time with us. I must add that the civilians I have just mentioned were killed in the square by a machine gun. Orders to fire upon all the civilians were given by the commandant of our company, Captain Baron von Schaumberg.

The above was read over to the witness, who confirms it and signs it together with us.

Inspector of Mobile Police,

Henri LEPLANT.

A. ROBERT.

Rudolf GRIMMER.

2. Lehmann, Walter, born January 23rd, 1891, at Buhlau, son of Arno and Ida Gottlöber; bachelor, schoolmaster at Freiburg (Saxony):

I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

I am a non-commissioned officer of the active army in the 182nd Infantry Regiment. I was taken prisoner at Létré.

Interrogated : We entered Dinant on the morning of August 23rd, and we were told off in parties to make perquisitions in the houses of the town and find any weapons that might be concealed in them. We had orders to kill any civilians who should threaten us. My party did not kill any civilians. I did not see any civilians shot at Dinant. On the Sunday morning my captain, Adler, transmitted to me an order from the Higher Command to set fire to the houses in the town. To be quite exact, this order was given me by Lieutenant Hartung, who received it from the captain. I was obliged to obey, and accompanied by eight men, I set fire to an entire quarter. We entered the houses and set fire with matches to the curtains and everything specially combustible.

The above was read over to the witness, who confirmed it, but did not sign, with us, declaring he did not wish to.

Inspector of Mobile Police,

Henri LEPLANT.

A. ROBERT.

After again swearing to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, Lehmann asked to add :—

I expressed myself badly; perhaps some of the soldiers of my party *did* kill civilians, but not to my knowledge.

Further, at the time when the houses were set on fire, I was detailed to keep guard outside, while another party kindled the fires inside. I only saw one house set on fire.

The above was read over to the witness, who confirms it, and signs together with us.

Inspector of Mobile Police,

Walter LEHMANN.

A. ROBERT.

Henri LEPLANT.

3. Peisker, Johannes, born June 11th, 1895, at Grossportau, (Saxony), son of Paul and Anna Peisker ; bachelor, gardener :

I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

I am a non-commissioned officer of the active army in the 108th Infantry Regiment, 7th Company. I was taken prisoner on September 17th at La Ville-au-Bois.

Interrogated : We entered Dinant on August 21st about 9 p.m., and we fired at the windows of the houses to protect ourselves from the enemies who might have been hidden there. At 11 p.m. we fell back upon the environs of the town, where we stayed all the following day. We re-entered Dinant on Sunday, August 23rd, about 10 in the morning. Orders were given to all the companies of my regiment to kill the civilians. This order was transmitted to me by Lieutenant Harich. My company had no occasion to obey this order, for it was specially told off to cover the artillery. I saw in several parts of the town that day groups of civilians who had been shot. There were women and children among them, but I cannot tell you which of the companies of my regiment carried out these executions. The whole of my regiment had received orders from Major Kirchbach to set fire to all the houses of Dinant. The order was obeyed, but my company took no part in the business, for the reasons stated above.

Interrogated : I know that women and children from among the civil population of Dinant were taken prisoners by my regiment and the 182nd Infantry Regiment, who placed them in front of themselves in the fighting that followed ; these hostages were killed by French bullets. My company did not adopt this method.

The above was read over to the witness, who confirms it and signs it with us.

Inspector of Mobile Police,

Johannes PEISKER.

A. ROBERT.

Henri LEPLANT.

4. Breitschneider, Ewald, born October 26th, 1891, at Kleinthimmiger (Saxony), son of Ernest and Theresa Winkler ; married, tramway ticket clerk at Dresden, father of one child :

I swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

I am a Reservist of the 108th Infantry Regiment, 5th Company. I was taken prisoner near Châlons on September 11th.

Interrogated : On Friday, August 21st last, in the evening, our Lieutenant Schultz, acting in place of our company commander, who was wounded, informed us that our orders were to massacre all civilians in Dinant. This was an Army Corps order. My company only came to Dinant on Monday, August 24th, when everything had already been burnt. I saw in the streets of the town civilians who had been shot, and in particular a heap of about 90 corpses on one side of the square. I cannot tell you who carried out these executions. I know that the 178th, 108th, and 182nd Infantry Regiments and the 100th Grenadiers were at Dinant at the time.

The above was read over to the witness, who confirms it and signs it with us.

Inspector of Mobile Police,

Henri LEPLANT.

A. ROBERT.

Ewald BREITSCHNEIDER.

No. 2.

Interrogatory under oath, on May 7th, 1915, by M. Cruveillé, Captain, Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 16th Army Corps District, assisted by the Territorial Mazot, registrar's clerk to the said Court, of Philipp, Emil, German prisoner at Cette (Hérault), aged twenty-six, married, chimney repairer, living at Gross-

Roehrsdorf (Saxony), who deposed as follows through the medium of Corporal Fernand Dorion, aged twenty-eight, of the 9th Artillery, Interpreter of the German language at the dépôt for prisoners of war at Cette (Hérault), who has taken the oath prescribed by Article 332 of the Code of Criminal Instruction, that he will faithfully translate the speeches to be transmitted between persons speaking different languages :

I belong to the 12th Company of the 101st Infantry Regiment of the Saxon Reserve, Colonel Meister, Captain Hauth. I am a soldier of the first class.

Q.—Tell us on what date you entered Belgium, on what date you subsequently entered France, and what itinerary you followed ?

A.—We entered Belgium about August 20th by Ulffingen and Marche. We made our way towards France by roads I do not know and cannot indicate ; finally, we crossed the frontier at Rethel at the end of August, or the beginning of September. Wounded on September 7th, I was made prisoner on the 13th at Mourmelon.

Q.—Did you not notice that both in Belgium and France the majority of the villages, towns and farms had been burnt or destroyed ? Why were those fires kindled, and did you help to light them ?

A.—Dinant was completely burnt out. We passed through the town very quickly, because the ruined houses were a constant danger to the soldiers. In the other districts we passed through, the spectacle presented was much the same : everything was in ruins, and everything had been burnt by the troops who had passed before us. The doors of the houses were broken in. I cannot say why or how these fires had been kindled ; I supposed it was by artillery fire.

Q.—Had you not received orders to burn everything and to set fire to all the houses from which shots had been fired, or appeared to have been fired, at the troops ?

A.—We had received no general orders to burn the houses, but it was often done. On the other hand, we had official orders to burn all the houses if a shot were fired from any one of them at the troops. At the beginning of September, in the first days of the month, the 3rd Battalion of my regiment, 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th Companies, had been sent out to reconnoitre. The 9th Company was scouting. When they arrived in a certain village a shot, and indeed several shots, were fired at them ; they fell back, and the officer in command of the detachment brought forward the artillery, which fired incendiary bombs and destroyed the village, till there was nothing of it left. Not one of the inhabitants reappeared.

Q.—Were not houses pillaged, and were you not present at, and did you not participate in scenes of pillage ?

A.—We were forbidden to go into the houses. I do not know what was done in other regiments, or even in my own. I neither was present at nor did I participate in any scene of pillage.

Q.—Did you not receive orders to treat the civil population with the utmost severity, and were you not present at executions or shootings of civilians ?

A.—We received no orders to this effect, and I did not see any civilians shot. The day we entered France we took away with us a priest and an old man. We kept them two days, then we handed them over to another company, and I do not know what became of them.

Q.—Were you not ordered to finish off the wounded ?

A.—No. We were only cautioned to be careful, because sometimes the wounded fired at us.

Q. Do you not know that women and children were tortured and martyred ?

A.—Passing through Dinant I saw in a street a woman who had been killed and whose face was all battered. The same day I saw the corpse of a woman on a staircase. Just as we crossed the frontier I saw an officer who, on the grounds that a shot had been fired, climbed up to a window and killed an elderly man who was standing near it by firing his revolver at him.

Q.—At Mourmelon did you not hear some of your comrades who were prisoners like yourself stating that they had fired or robbed houses, maltreated women and mutilated children ? Did they not also say that they had finished off the wounded ?

A.—No.

The above having been read over and translated by the Interpreter, the present report was signed by us, the Registrar, the Interpreter and the witness, who declared that his answers had been faithfully transcribed, that they contained the truth, and that he confirmed them.

No. 3.

Interrogatory under oath, on April 30th, 1915, by M. Cruveillé, Captain, Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 16th Army Corps District, of one Walther, Arthur, German prisoner of war, aged twenty-nine, married, hotel waiter, domiciled at Dresden, who deposed as follows:—

I belong to the 6th Company of the 101st Infantry Regiment of the Saxon Reserves.

Q.—At what date did you enter Belgium first, and subsequently France, and what itinerary did you follow?

A.—We entered Belgium on the 17th or 18th of August; we did not go through either Dinant or Namur, and we marched very rapidly through Belgium to reach the French frontier, which we passed by crossing the Meuse on August 28th. I do not know where we passed. I made some notes in my diary, which was taken from me when I was captured at Châlons on September 26th.

Q.—Did you not take part in executions, pillage, the destruction or the burning of buildings? did you not receive orders on these points from your commanders? If so, tell us the names of these officers, and the nature of the orders that were given you.

A.—No executions were ordered by the officers of my regiment, and not a single civilian was shot by us. I do not know if any were shot by other regiments. Nor do I know more concerning the women and children. No order was ever given to us about the wounded, and, as far as I know, they were not finished off.

Though I cannot give you any information as to the matters of which you have just spoken, I can declare, on the other hand, that in all the villages through which I passed with my regiment all the houses had been burnt or were still burning. These fires had been kindled by the troops which had preceded us, and, in my opinion, quite without reason, for there were no signs of destruction by artillery, and there seemed to have been no fighting in the neighbourhood. Wherever we passed everything had been cleared out, and I never entered any house.

Q.—Then you know nothing, you saw nothing, and heard nothing said? You do not know that houses were sacked, that men, women and children were put to death, that the wounded were finished off? It is not possible that you can be telling the truth.

A.—I did not concern myself with anything; we marched very rapidly, and I never fired a single shot throughout the campaign. The only thing I did note was that all the fires had been kindled by troops who preceded us.

The above having been read over to the witness, he declared that it contained the truth, confirmed it and signed it together with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

J. MAZOT. G. PRINGUE. D. CRUVEILLE. Arthur WALTHER.

No. 4.

Interrogatory under oath, on May 20th, 1915, by M. Laurent, Captain, Prosecuting Counsel of the Court-Martial of Algiers, of Tscharne, Hermann, a Saxon, made prisoner near Châlons-sur-Marne on September 11th, 1914, private of the Landwehr in the 103rd Infantry Regiment of Saxon Reserve, 2nd Battalion, 8th Company, born May 13th, 1884, at Kottmarsdorf (Saxony), baker, bachelor.

Interrogated: At Mariembourg, some houses were fired by order of the Captain, because, it seems, civilians had fired upon us. Moreover, subsequently I often saw heaps of civilians who had been shot.

Interrogated: We who came on behind the others saw these heaps everywhere.

Interrogated: I never saw any shots fired at us, but I saw civilians shot, and I myself received orders to burn some houses at Mariembourg.

Interrogated: In Belgium I saw there were often women among the dead bodies.

Interrogated: At Sommesous and at Sommepy I was present at the pillage of houses. Indeed, it was my Colonel, Freiherr von Ompteda, who had given orders for the pillage. Further, this was what happened. The troops would take possession of a town and pursue the enemy; then, when the Reserves arrived, they pillaged the houses, taking linen, silver, jewellery, provisions, drink, etc. I saw all this. Nay,

more ; when they pillaged they piled the goods in heaps ; the adjutants made a selection from these, keeping the best for the Colonel and the Major, and others for the other officers.

Interrogated : I also noticed that many of my comrades, when they came back from the battlefield, brought with them objects they had stolen from the dead and the wounded. These men belonged to my regiment.

Interrogated : How can I give you the name of any particular officer ? All of them—I do not hesitate to say so—profited by the pillage they prescribed.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms it and signs with the Interpreter and the Registrar.

LAURENT.

CHAGOT.

PLUHR.

Hermann TSCHARNE.

Session of May 22nd.

Interrogatory under oath of Eichhorn, Paul, Saxon, taken prisoner near Tahure, March 6th, 1915, a private of the Landwehr, in the 101st Infantry Regiment of the Saxon Reserve, born April 29th, 1883, at Klein-Scherma (Saxony).

Interrogated : I often heard it said that the officers sent home boxes, valises and large trunks full of valuables regularly. It is true that I never saw what was in these boxes, but the orderlies who took them to the station told me so. Such incidents took place more especially at Moronvillers, but it was above all at Dinant and Rethel that these parcels were despatched. The officers often had leave when they were at the front. They spent this leave in the *châteaux* at the rear of the army. And it was during these holidays and their sojourn in the *châteaux* that they made their little profits.

Interrogated : I have nothing more to tell you. The first troops who entered France committed such depredations that we Reservists were strictly forbidden to sack and steal. These injunctions were superfluous, however, for there was nothing left, everything was devastated.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms it and signs with the Registrar and the Interpreter.

LAURENT.

CHAGOT.

PLUHR.

Paul Robert EICHHORN.

No. 5.

Interrogatory under oath, on April 22nd, 1915, by M. Gavillot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecutor to the Court-Martial of the 12th Army Corps District, of Tietze, Richard, who deposed as follows :—

Surname and Christian name : Tietze, Richard.

Age : 35 years ; condition : married, May 3rd, 1914, at Kamenz.

Profession : soldier.

Domicile : Kamenz, Saxony.

At present Vize-Feldwebel (Sergeant-Major) in the 178th Infantry Regiment, 7th Company, XIIth Saxon Corps.

At the beginning of the mobilisation I was instructed to accompany some artillery batteries from Winterspelt to Burgreuland, the point of concentration.

Then, on August 6th, I went to Steinweiler with my regiment, where it was our duty to await hostile aviators, and where the division was concentrated.

As far as to the Meuse we did no real fighting, but we had numerous scraps with the civil population, who received us very badly.

I remember that a soldier in the last company of my battalion got a large round bullet in the arm ; a civilian had fired at him.

I do not actually know what happened after this incident, but I can guess ; we were obliged to shoot a few civilians.

Interrogated : It was the Colonel of the regiment which had been fired on who ordered the executions.

When the 1st battalion of my regiment approached the village of Lefte, not far from the Meuse, shots were fired and fifteen men were killed.

Every time a shot was fired we were ordered to go into the houses, but we never found any soldiers there. Then we made the civilians come out.

We collected them together in a square ; Major Fränzel questioned them, and the majority of these civilians were shot two hours later.

The firing party was taken from the men of the 3rd battalion ; I know that each squad consisted of eight men selected by the commandants of the units.

The women were separated from the men, and sent to a convent at Leffe. I know that some of my comrades declared that a good number of them had been violated ; personally, I saw nothing of the sort.

Q.—What steps were taken to discover which of the civilians had fired on your troops ?

A.—All the civilians were ranged in a row, and the soldiers belonging to units which had suffered losses from the shots of individuals passed along in front of them. They pointed out the persons they recognised, and Major Fränzel at once ordered that these should be executed.

Interrogated : We always bivouacked when we halted ; we were never in billets.

During the halts in the day-time near villages or hamlets, several of our men would slip away and go into the houses, where they took chains, crosses, and gold or silver locketts, things made of precious metal, in any case.

I did my best to suppress these irregularities, and I caused the jewels thus stolen to be taken to the Major. He punished the offenders severely and had them tied up to trees for hours.

I was never present at any scene of pillage . . . or rather, yes, I remember very distinctly that the Sub-Lieutenant of the 1st Company of the 1st Battalion of my regiment went into a house at Laroche or at Marche (Belgium), and came out with a large sum of money, several thousands of francs, which he paid in to the regimental fund.

I may also say that at Rethel I went with some of my men into a crèche ; we took some silver and copper money from a drawer, and this was handed over to the regimental fund.

I am also able to tell you that as soon as we entered French territory, where we passed through Signy-l'Abbaye, Launoy and Châlons, we carried out no measures of reprisal towards the civil population, who behaved very properly to us.

I know there were a great many fires as we passed, but our infantry soldiers had nothing to do with these ; they were the work of the Uhlans, who preceded us. I have heard it stated that if they kindled all these fires it was because German soldiers had been killed, and in such cases our orders were to execute the inhabitants and burn the houses.

Interrogated : The houses were set on fire with straw, hay and petroleum.

I heard some of the cavalymen say that corpses of Belgian civilians had been found mutilated (feet and hands cut off) ; from what I was told it would seem to have been the Uhlans who did this.

The incidents in question were said to have taken place between August 18th and September 4th. I was surprised to hear this.

Interrogated : I have also heard that in Belgium little children were mutilated by our soldiers ; if this is true they can only have done such things in moments of aberration.

I cannot believe that such orders were given by superior officers.

Q.—Tell us the names of the officers of your company and of the 8th Company.

The Colonel was Herr von Reyter, the Captain Herr John, the active Lieutenant Herr Pietzschke, the Reserve Lieutenants, Herr Wendt and Herr Eichler.

In the 8th Company Herr Umlauff, 1st Lieutenant, was acting as Captain. In civil life this officer was a professor in a college ; he was beloved by his men. . . . I do not know the names of other officers in this company.

The deposition having been read to the witness, he agrees that it is correctly transcribed, confirms it, and signs with us, the Registrar and the Interpreter, approving the erasure of thirty-three unimportant words.

We note that before signing, the witness urges that his name should not be divulged.

Robert SEZILLE.

GAVILLOT.

MAX JAUNEZ.

Richard TIETZE.

Vize-Feldwebel 7/178.

Interrogatory under oath, May 6th, 1915, by M. Cruveillé, Captain, Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 16th Army Corps District, of :—

Schlieder, Kurt, a German prisoner at Agde, aged twenty-four, bachelor, book-seller, domiciled at Dresden, who deposed as follows :—

I belong to the 12th Company, Captain Martini, Lieutenant Schmidt, Aster, of the 108th Infantry Regiment, Colonel Count von Witzum von Eckstädt. I was wounded on September 3rd, and taken prisoner on the 13th at Mourmelon. We entered Belgium on August 18th or 19th by way of Luxemburg. We went through Dinant, Cherain, Achêne, Onhaye and other places which I do not know, entering France at Givet about the 24th or 25th of August.

Q.—Did you not notice that in Belgium, as also in France, the majority of the towns or villages, and also of the farms, had been burnt or destroyed ? Do you not know why these fires were kindled, and did you not help to kindle them ?

A.—I did, indeed, remark that everything had been systematically burnt, and that the town of Dinant in particular had been completely destroyed by fire. I asked the reason of this severity, and I was told that we must show no mercy because the inhabitants were hostile to our troops, and some of them even fired upon us.

When a shot was fired from a house the whole quarter was surrounded, the men were arrested and shot, and the houses were reduced to ashes. These operations were carried out sometimes by the artillery and sometimes by the infantry. The artillery used incendiary bombs and the infantry hand-grenades, which they had at their disposal.

Q.—Had you not received orders to burn everything in Belgium ?

A.—No, but it was done all the same.

Q.—Were you not present at and did you not participate in scenes of pillage ? Were you not authorised to go into the houses to take what you required, and if the inmates refused to give it to you, did you not ill-treat them ?

A.—I noticed on several occasions that houses were given up to pillage, and I was present as an onlooker at scenes of this description. We were authorised to go into the houses and take what we needed, but it was more especially the deserted houses that were pillaged. Incidents of this kind occurred almost daily. In France, about the 25th or 26th of August, that is to say almost immediately after having crossed the frontier, I saw soldiers searching and pillaging houses and taking away all the linen. It was the infantry more especially who indulged in these practices.

Q.—Did you not receive orders to treat the civilian population with extreme severity, and were you not present at executions and the shooting of civilians ?

A.—I do not know if such orders were given, and for my part I never committed acts of this nature, but I know that such things happened. I did not see any civilians shot as we went through Dinant, but I saw some executed in other places the names of which I do not know. The reason given for these shootings was that civilians had fired on the soldiers.

On August 23rd or 24th I saw three civilians shot in a ditch close to Givet.

Q.—Do you not know that women and children were brutally treated and tortured ?

A.—I heard some of my comrades tell how they had violated women in Belgium and killed them afterwards. I don't know anything about the children.

Q.—Were you not ordered to finish off the wounded ?

A.—No.

Q.—While you were in hospital at Mourmelon did you not hear your comrades boast of having burnt and pillaged houses, shot civilians, maltreated women and children, and finished off the wounded ?

A.—No, I did not hear such things related.

The above having been read over and the translation given by the Interpreter, the present statement was signed by us, the Registrar, the Interpreter and the witness, who declared that his answers had been faithfully transcribed, that they contained the truth, and that he confirmed them.

No. 7.

Interrogatory under oath on June 5th, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, of Schönherr, Alfred Bruno, born at Groitzsch, near Leipzig, on May 31st, 1891, the son of Ludwig and Selma Böttsch, following the trade of carpenter, soldier of the first class, 101st Grenadiers, XIIth Saxon Corps, at present interned in the dépôt for prisoners of war at Blaye, who deposed as follows:—

I was taken prisoner September 9th, 1914, at Châlons. I belong to the 101st Grenadiers (4th Company, Captain von Brosek, Major Schlick, Colonel Meister). We left Dresden on August 8th for Luxemburg and Belgium. I noticed nothing concerning the attitude of the Belgian population, as the villages were nearly all abandoned and the roads encumbered with fugitives. On August 23rd we arrived at Dinant, and I was detached to join the Corps of Pioneers, who were engaged in throwing a bridge across the river. Consequently, I did not pass through the town, where a certain number of the houses were in flames. While we were bringing along the pontoons, having laid down our rifles in order to be more at our ease, we were fired upon. A section and an officer received orders to find out where the volley came from. They caught some French and Belgian soldiers; the latter were elderly men. Those who had fired could not have been civilians, for the shots were in volleys. Near the rock I saw a large building in which two hundred women and children were collected and guarded by soldiers. After leaving Dinant we continued our march towards the frontier. In the villages we found notices on which was written: "Do not attack our troops if you want to live in peace." In one especially I noticed a placard with these words: *Nicht plündern. Gute Leute.* (Not to be plundered. Good people.) I was specially told off to act with patrols; I never met any armed civilians. Neither did I ever witness any arrest of civilian prisoners, nor was I present at executions. I was, however, present at the discovery of fifty shot-guns in a country house near Dinant, where the Staff was quartered. The owner of the house was arrested in consequence of this discovery. Requisitions were made under the direction of an officer or a non-commissioned officer; the doors were broken open and we took linen, which was distributed to the men when they had stated what they required. In like manner we also took wine from the cellars, but the officers saw that this was diluted with water.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares that he has told the truth and signs with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

LABORDERIE.

M. FUISCHS.

LOUSTALOT.

SCHÖNHERR.

No. 8.

Interrogatory under oath, May 4th, 1915, by M. Bonnemaïson, Captain of Constabulary, commanding the district of Tunis, of Schlechte, Fritz, born June 5th, 1889, at Bitterfeld, mason, Reservist of the 103rd active Regiment, 11th Company.

I joined at Bautzen. We went by train to Ehrdorf, marched through Ehlenz, Steinbach (Belgium), passed through Laroche, Ciney, Dinant, Rocroy, Rethel, Ambonnay, Châlons, La Marne and Lenharré, where I was taken prisoner.

I can declare on oath that my company never was fired upon by the inhabitants and never had to set fire to a house or a village. I saw that the artillery set fire to villages by order, and as a punishment. This happened at Sorinne, on August 21st. On August 23rd, at Dinant, all males from 17 to 40 years old were shot by the Marburg Jägers, and thirteen men were shot by our 1st Company, by order of the commandant of the division. As the inhabitants had taken refuge in a forest right and left of the town, the active battalion of the Marburg Jägers divided into two companies on the right and two on the left, formed in open order and shot everyone they encountered. The women and children were spared and shut up in a convent. Nothing was done to the women. The men who were found in the town were shot on the Place du Marché by the 102nd (active) and the 103rd (active) Saxon Regiments. The Marburg Jägers are Prussians—they have an M on their shoulder-straps. They had been placed at the disposal of our Army Corps and under the command of General Freiherr von der Goltz.

I saw thirteen men shot who had, it was said, fired upon the 3rd Company. The 1st Company took them into a meadow in front of the town; the Colonel came and announced that they were to be shot by order of the Division; their hands

were tied behind their backs. The platoon shot first one, then a second, then a third. The Colonel noticed this, and then gave orders that the last ten should be shot all at once. It was the Captain of the 1st Company who gave orders to shoot them one by one. I do not know his name.

The shops were pillaged by the soldiers without orders.

I shall never be able to forget the sight of Dinant. There were about fifty corpses of civilians in the Place du Marché.

All the shops were plundered; boots and shoes, linen and cloth were thrown out into the street; all the houses were burning.

On the 25th all the villages we passed were blazing like torches.

The witness signed with us, after his statement had been duly read over and translated.

CAMPANA.

BONNEMAISON.

Adolf Fritz SCHLECHTE.

No. 9.

Interrogatory under oath, on May 5th, 1915, by M. Cruveillé, Captain, Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 16th Army Corps District, of Petzold, Bruno, German prisoner at Agde (Hérault), aged twenty-six, bachelor, gardener, domiciled at Löschwitz (Dresden), who deposed as follows:—

I belong to the 3rd Company of the 103rd (active) Saxon Infantry Regiment, Colonel Hoch, Captain Roch.

Q.—What part of Belgium did you go through to reach the French frontier? On your march through the country did you not notice that all the houses had been set on fire, that the majority of them had been sacked, and that the inhabitants had been shot? Did not your regiment take part in these proceedings?

A.—We entered Belgium about August 20th; we passed near Dinant, whence we could see that the town was on fire. I went into it the next day, and I noticed that the majority, not to say all, of the houses had been burnt and destroyed or were still burning. I also noticed in the same quarters and outside the doors a great number of civilians who had been shot and left there. I asked what was the meaning of this, and some soldiers told me that these people had been shot because they were suspected of having fired upon our troops. The persons shot were all men. I also saw at one end of the town a house in which a great many women and children had been imprisoned; I do not know what became of them, but I was told they were to be taken to Germany and interned there. These civilians were collected in groups of about twenty persons. I cannot tell you the route we took after leaving Dinant on the side nearest the French frontier. I made some notes on this subject in my diary, but this was taken from me at Mourmelon. The majority of the villages through which we passed were completely destroyed, burnt, and even in ruins, the doors wrenched off and the windows shattered. We saw a great many houses that had been plundered. The soldiers went into these houses on the pretext of looking for inhabitants who had fired on the troops, and they took advantage of this to plunder them and then set them on fire. I do not know with what materials these fires were kindled, but it was certainly not by artillery, and one could see at once on looking at the houses that they had been fired with combustible matter. I can personally declare that in Belgium, on August 27th, in villages and farms the names of which are unknown to me, I saw houses invaded by soldiers, who took what they wanted by force, and who, after devastating everything, came out of the houses carrying articles of every kind. There were no officers with them, but there were non-commissioned officers who marched in front of them. As we were in want of clean body-linen in our company at this time, our non-commissioned officers went and fetched some from the houses, and distributed it to us. This happened pretty often, and they generally chose houses of the better sort for these visits. Our supply service was very irregular, and so we were sent into the houses to take everything we needed.

Q.—Were you not ordered to set fire to the houses when you entered Belgium?

A.—Yes; we were ordered to set fire without mercy to any house when the inhabitants refused to submit to requisitions. We had no special material for the purpose, but we were told that in the case of ordinary houses we could just fetch straw, or set fire to the bed and window curtains with matches. In farms we were ordered to go up into the lofts and to set fire to the crops.

Q.—Did you obey these orders and did you not realise that, in acting as you were doing, you were committing a crime ?

A.—It was an order, we had to obey it, and it was because we had received this order that during our march through Belgium and towards the French frontier my regiment performed the acts I have described under the direction of our non-commissioned officers.

Q.—And how did you treat the inhabitants ?

A.—When they offered resistance we beat them and forced them to bring out themselves the things we wanted, and we made them do all the heavy work we should otherwise have had to do ourselves.

Q.—Was this too by order ?

A.—Yes, it was an official order, and our non-commissioned officers superintended the operations.

Q.—Did you not also receive orders to treat the civil population severely and mercilessly ?

A.—No, but when civilians were suspected of having fired upon us we were instructed to arrest them and shoot them. I saw executions of this kind carried out by the 178th Saxon Regiment ; there were only men, and these were shot forty at a time. The women and children were meanwhile shut up in the churches and afterwards taken away, I know not whither.

Q.—Were not machine-guns used ?

A.—Yes, they were shot with machine-guns. I saw this twice, once at Dinant, about August 26th, and a few hours after, in a village near Dinant, and each time it was done by the 178th Regiment. Passing through the villages I saw other victims who had been shot by the troops who had preceded us.

Q.—Did you never seize inhabitants who were suspected of having fired upon you and shoot them ?

A.—This did not happen in our regiment, but it did in others.

Q.—Were you not ordered to finish off the wounded you might encounter on your route ?

A.—No. Besides, I was wounded and taken prisoner on September 7th, near Châlons, and so I was only a very short time with my regiment.

Q.—At Mourmelon, when you were in hospital, did you not hear your comrades say that they had burnt, pillaged, and devastated houses, that they had murdered women and children, shot civilians without any reason, and finished off the wounded ?

A.—They told us they had sacked, burnt and destroyed houses, and shot civilians who had fired upon them, but I did not hear them say that they had murdered women and children and finished off the wounded.

The above having been read over and a translation given by the Interpreter, the present statement was signed by us, the Registrar, the Interpreter, and the witness, who declared that his answers had been faithfully transcribed, that they contained the truth, and that he confirmed them.

J. MAZOT.

D. MASSUQUE.

D. CRUVEILLÉ.

PETZOLD.

No. 10.

Interrogatory under oath on May 5th, 1915, by M. Cruveillé, Captain, Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 16th Army Corps District, of Pflock, Carl, German prisoner at Agde, aged twenty-three, bachelor, mason, domiciled at Halle-on-Salle, who deposed as follows through the medium of Massuque, Donat, of the 121st Territorial Regiment, aged forty-three, Interpreter of the German language at the dépôt for prisoners of war at Agde, who took the oath prescribed by Article 332 of the Code of Criminal Instruction, swearing that he would faithfully translate the speeches to be transmitted between persons speaking different languages.

I belong to the 3rd Company of the 182nd Infantry Regiment of the Saxon Reserve, Colonel Francke, Captain Pechwell, Lieutenant Albert.

Q.—On what date did you enter Belgium and subsequently France, and what itinerary did you follow ?

A.—We entered Belgium on August 18th, and France on the 28th of the same month, after following an itinerary I cannot give. I had noted it on my diary, which was taken from me at Mourmelon, on September 13th, when I was made prisoner. I was wounded on September 3rd.

Q.—In the course of your march did you not notice that houses had been burnt, plundered and set on fire ? Did you not yourself take part in this pillage and arson ?

A.—I noticed it, but I do not know what caused these fires, and I took no part in kindling them. I was in charge of the baggage, and therefore I always preceded or followed the troops. We went through Dinant without stopping, then we returned next day, and I observed that nearly the whole of the town was burnt. Nearly all the villages we went through afterwards were burnt or still burning, but as we generally passed at night I was not able to see whether these villages had been set on fire by artillery or by the troops.

Q.—Did you not notice that in the villages you passed through the majority of the houses had been plundered and stripped ?

A.—I did indeed note that many houses and farms had been plundered by the troops who had gone on in front of us, and when we passed through in our turn we found there was nothing left. In my regiment we never committed such acts.

Q.—Did you not receive orders to treat the civil population with the utmost severity ? Were not men, women and children shot for no reason whatever ?

A.—The day after that on which we had passed through Dinant we camped upon a small knoll, not far from which was a little solitary house. The battle was over, and as a shot had been fired from this direction the men of my company were ordered by the leader of the convoy to surround this farm, to take the inhabitants out, and to shoot them. This was immediately done, and the two men who were found in the house were put to death there and then. A little later, in France, as we were passing through a village, civilians were suspected of having fired upon us. The artillery accordingly fired on the village ; the artillerymen then went into it, entered the houses, seized all the persons they found there, and brought them out on to the road. Among them there were old men who could scarcely drag themselves along, who were already wounded, and who could not have fired out of the windows. All these people were ranged along a wall, and the artillerymen began by shooting them down with revolvers ; then they had machine-guns brought up and finished them off.

Q.—Can you fix the date of these occurrences and the number of the artillery regiment which carried out these fusillades ?

A.—We entered France on August 28th. I was wounded on September 3rd ; so it must have happened on August 29th or 30th. I cannot tell the name of the place, but it was quite close to the frontier.

Q.—Did you not receive orders, as soon as you entered Belgium, to set fire to the houses ?

A.—No, but I know that when civilians had fired, or were suspected of having fired, upon us, the houses were burnt and the inhabitants were shot. We had no inflammable material at our disposal, but the Engineers were amply provided with it. They had more especially grenades which they used for this purpose.

Q.—Were you never present at the burning of a house, and did you never take part in such an act by order of your chiefs ?

A.—I was with the baggage, so I could not do anything of the sort, but I know what the methods were, because in the evening at our bivouac, the soldiers who kindled these fires told us about them. When a house was condemned the Captain ordered eight or ten men to stay behind and they collected straw, to which they set fire before they withdrew.

Q.—Did you not also receive orders to finish off the wounded ?

A.—No.

Q.—Did you not at Mourmelon hear men boasting of having committed such crimes ?

A.—No. If I knew anything more I would tell it, for I am very sensible of the devotion with which I have been tended by the French doctors, who have spared no pains on my behalf, and thanks to whom I am almost cured.

The above having been read over and a translation made by the Interpreter, the present statement was signed by us, the Registrar, the Interpreter and the witness, who declared that his answers had been faithfully transcribed, that they contained the truth, and that he confirmed them.

J. MAZOT.

MASSUQUE.

CRUVEILLÉ.

Carl PFLOCK.

Interrogatory under oath on May 4th, 1915, by M. Cruveillé, Captain, Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 16th Army Corps District, assisted by the territorial soldier, Mazot, Registrar's Clerk to the said Court, of Pfeifer, Paul, German prisoner at Agde (Hérault), aged twenty-one, bachelor, labourer, domiciled at Rothenbach (Saxony), who deposed as follows by the medium of Sergeant Massuque, Donat, of the 121st Territorial Regiment, Interpreter of the German language at the dépôt for prisoners of war at Agde, who took the oath prescribed by Article 332 of the Code of Criminal Instruction, to translate faithfully the speeches to be transmitted between persons speaking different languages.

I belong to the 100th (active) Regiment, Major in command of the battalion, von Witzleben; Captain, von Römer.

I was wounded on September 3rd, and taken prisoner at Mourmelon on the 13th of the same month.

Q.—On what date did you enter Belgium first, and then France, and what itinerary did you follow ?

A.—We entered Belgium about August 7th near Dinant, but I cannot give the itinerary we followed, for I am an illiterate, and I have no recollection of the towns and villages we passed through. We entered France on September 1st. As I was wounded on the 3rd, I know nothing of what happened.

Q.—Were you not present at or did you not take part in the burning or destruction of houses ?

A.—We spent two nights at Dinant, from August 23rd to August 25th. When we entered the town it was all in flames or entirely burnt. It was nothing but a heap of smoking ruins. I did not see any soldiers kindling fires, and I personally took no part in such acts. Outside Dinant, and especially right up to the French frontier, everything was devastated and burnt; in my opinion this had been done systematically by the troops, in pursuance of orders given by the chiefs; or perhaps the latter merely closed their eyes and allowed the soldiers to do as they would.

Q.—When you entered Belgium did you not receive orders to set fire to the houses ?

A.—No. No order was given us, and for my part I never burned anything.

Q.—Were you not authorised to go into the houses to take what you required ? Did you not enter any yourself, and were you not present at the pillage of houses ?

A.—Our officers left us free to do as we liked, but as the houses were all burnt and in ruins it would have been useless for us to go into them, for there was nothing left in them. We received bread regularly from Germany, but as to meat, wine and other drinks, I always thought these were taken from the plundered houses.

Q.—When you passed through villages or near isolated farms did you not notice that the buildings had been pillaged and that the greater part of the objects they had contained had been carried off ?

A.—We often passed in villages and in the open country houses that had been pillaged, and in which there was hardly anything left. The doors were broken in, the windows demolished, and one could see from outside that there was hardly anything left in them. These ravages could only have been committed by the troops who passed before us.

Q.—Do you not know that the soldiers went into the houses, and when the inhabitants refused to give them what they asked, set fire to the building ?

A.—No. I cannot tell you about that. I know nothing about it.

Q.—Had you not received orders to treat the civil population with the utmost severity ?

A.—No, but before the war we had been told that civilians were to be treated rigorously, and when I went through Dinant I saw along the streets and in one of the squares groups of civilians, men and women, who had been shot, and who were left there unburied till the evening of the following day.

Q.—Had you not been told more especially that when a shot was fired, or appeared to have been fired, from a house, you were to surround it, and seizing all the inhabitants you might find in it, without exception, were to put them to death ?

A.—Yes, we had been ordered to seize all the inhabitants of a house from which a shot should be fired at us, to shoot them, and to destroy the house with an incendiary bomb.

Q.—Did you not personally witness acts of this nature and take part in them ?

A.—No, but as we passed through the villages I saw a great many hand grenades which had not burst and were lying in the streets, and others, on the contrary, which had exploded in the houses ; I saw the fragments of these.

Q.—So you had inflammable substances specially designed for kindling fires at your disposal ?

A.—The ordinary soldiers had not, but the Engineers or Pioneers had them at their disposal.

Q.—Did you not receive orders to fire upon the wounded you found on your way ?

A.—No, and I do not know whether this was done.

Q.—You were in hospital at Mourmelon from September 3rd to 13th. During this period there were with you in hospital soldiers belonging to Saxon regiments who boasted of having plundered and burnt houses, shot civilians, maltreated women and children, and murdered the wounded. You must certainly have heard specific incidents described. Let us hear some of these.

A.—I was so very ill, having been wounded in the lung, that I heard none of these stories.

The above having been read over and the translation given by the Interpreter, the present statement was signed by us, the Registrar, the Interpreter and the witness, who declared that his answers were faithfully transcribed, that they contained the truth, and that he confirmed them.

J. MAZOT.

MASSUQUE.

D. CRUVEILLÉ.

Paul PFEIFER.

No. 12.

Interrogatory on April 22nd, 1915, by M. Gavillot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecutor to the Court-Martial of the 12th Army Corps District, of Materne, Willy, private in the 178th Infantry Regiment, 1st Company, XIIth Saxon Corps, aged nineteen, bachelor, musician by profession, domiciled at Dresden-Plauen, who deposed as follows :—

I enlisted as a volunteer on April 1st, 1914, in the capacity of military musician.

I have passed my preliminary examinations.

My regiment is garrisoned at Kamenz (Saxony). I started for the front on Sunday, August 2nd. We detrained at Burgrenland ; we left the railway shortly before we entered Belgium.

On the march through Belgium I remember more particularly the unfriendly attitude of the civil population ; but before we came to Dinant I did not see the inhabitants firing upon us, nor executions carried out by us.

Nevertheless, I was greatly struck by seeing the large number of houses in flames along the road sides ; sometimes they were blazing on either side of the road, and the heat was so intense that we were obliged to hurry past in fear of suffocation.

It is quite certain that these fires had been kindled by order, because persons had concealed themselves in these houses to fire on our troops.

I have no doubt that all the inhabitants were brought out before the houses were fired.

At Dinant I saw thirteen persons shot who had been arrested shortly before. Among them there was a youth of from seventeen to eighteen years old ; the others were men verging upon fifty.

I suppose it was the officers who gave orders for these executions, but I do not know which.

Only six soldiers were told off to put these thirteen civilians to death.

I was about fifty yards from the place of execution, and I trembled as I watched it.

They began by tying a man to a tree ; a single soldier fired at him and only wounded him ; but as the man was bound he did not fall, he merely moved his head backwards and forwards. Then all the six soldiers fired upon him in turn to finish him off.

The other civilians who were waiting for execution witnessed this scene, and embraced, bidding each other farewell.

I repeat that I trembled, for I had never seen anything of the sort before.

After this first man, three others were shot by six soldiers firing all together. Finally these six soldiers opened fire for the last time upon the nine civilians who remained, and who fell one after the other.

An officer, a captain, whose name I never heard, and who did not belong to my regiment, approached the victims and fired his revolver at the heads of those who seemed to be still alive.

This scene lasted about a quarter of an hour.

The six soldiers who carried out the execution belonged to the 103rd Saxon Regiment.

Interrogated : It was certainly a captain who finished off the civilians who had been shot, but he was accompanied by several doctors, who no doubt pointed out those who were still living.

The firing squad had already retired when this took place.

Only the troops who were halted close to the field where the executions took place could have seen all the details.

There were a great many other executions at Dinant.

In a square which I will call the Market Place, I saw from fifty to sixty corpses of civilians who had been shot. As an auxiliary stretcher-bearer I had to cross this square twice to bring in our wounded. I stumbled against these corpses accidentally ; they were already stiff.

I am sure there were no women among them.

I often saw houses that had been burnt, but personally I was never present when any were set on fire, or, rather, I never saw the fire kindled, so that I cannot say what the process was in these cases.

I know nothing of mutilations inflicted by our soldiers on children and women. I heard, on the other hand, that German patrols were very brutally treated and that on this account there was to be no more quarter, that every person found with arms in his possession was to be shot.

Our Captain told us officially that on account of the cruelties practised upon the German troops all those in whose houses weapons were found were to be shot without mercy by order of the Emperor.

Pillage was strictly forbidden, but in the houses we found unoccupied we naturally took away anything we wanted.

Personally, however, I never made requisitions of this kind.

Since I have been in captivity I have heard from prisoners who arrived at the camp after me that our troops had violated a few women.

I cannot remember which of my comrades told me this ; it was those who were in the dormitory with me at Saint-Yrieix.

Interrogated : I can only remember the name of my Captain, who was called Hamann.

The deposition having been read over to the witness, he declared it to be accurate, and signed it with us, the Registrar and Interpreter.

Rob. SÉZILLE.

GAVILLOT.

Max JAUNEZ.

Willy MATERNE.

No. 13.

Interrogatory on April 24th, 1915, by M. Lamothe, Deputy Attorney-General of the Court of Appeal of Bordeaux, at present administrative officer of the 2nd class of the 13th Army Corps District, assisted by Sergeant Dugay, of the 102nd Infantry Regiment (Territorials), Sergeant Etienne acting as Registrar, and Corporal Thévenot, of the 11th Regiment of Mounted Chasseurs, Interpreter of the German language, who swore to translate well and truly the verbal answers hereinafter set down, of Müller, Oscar Arthur, born October 4th, 1891, at Meissen (Saxony), private in the 103rd Saxon Infantry Regiment, XIIth Army Corps, at present a prisoner of war. Questioned, he replied as follows :—

I entered Belgium after crossing the Meuse. I passed through Dinant, and from Dinant I came on foot as far as Châlons. I do not know the names of the small towns through which I passed. I was taken prisoner at Mourmelon. Everything was rased to the ground at Dinant when I arrived. The Germans had shut up some civilians in a convent. Searches were made in the houses. I do not know what became of these civilians, among whom there were nuns and priests. The detachment to which I belonged entered Dinant without fighting. The 11th Battalion of Jägers and the 177th Infantry Regiment of Dresden were before us at Dinant, where they were quartered. Everything was in flames. The Artillery had set fire to the place with their shells. The 48th Regiment of Field Artillery, of Dresden, was the unit which carried out the incendiary bombardment.

I know that the Colonel of my regiment gave orders to companies other than mine to go into the houses and bring out the soldiers and civilians who might be within, but he did not instruct them to break open the doors; besides, all the doors were open. No orders were given to my company on this point. Moreover, we stayed where we were, waiting for the reconstruction of a bridge. When the soldiers went into the houses at Dinant there was no fighting in the streets of the town. The fighting was going on in advanced positions outside. I must tell you that the Captain of my company informed us that as we entered Dinant an old woman posted at a window had killed the Major by firing at him with a revolver. This Major belonged to one of the active regiments. I do not know his name. As to the old woman, I cannot say what was done to her. I think it was because of this incident that orders were given to go into the houses. I did not hear anything more on the subject of alleged attacks made by civilians. I never saw any corpses of civilians during the march. I was never present at any scenes of violence offered to the population. I saw a great many burning houses on the way, but it did not come to my knowledge that they were kindled intentionally by German soldiers. I saw many French wounded; no one did them any harm as we passed. When we arrived in villages and small towns the inhabitants had all fled from their houses. We took any bread we found, but if by chance some inhabitant had remained he was given a warrant in payment.

The above having been read over, the witness confirms it and signs with us, the Interpreter, and the Sergeant who transcribes.

THEVENOT.

DUGAY.

LAMOthe.

Arthur MÜLLER.

No. 14.

Interrogatory under oath, June 8th, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Deputy Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, of Meissner, Paul, born at Roitzsch, August 27th, 1893, son of Oscar and Ernestine Boschen, by profession a teacher, private in the 101st Grenadiers, 11th Company, XIIth Saxon Corps, at present interned in the dépôt for prisoners of war at Blaye (No. 2456), who deposed as follows:—

I was taken prisoner on September 11th, 1914, at Châlons. I belong to the 101st Grenadiers (11th Company, Captain von Zeschau, Major von Abeken, Colonel Meister). We left Dresden on August 7th for Luxemburg and Belgium. Wherever we passed the behaviour of the Belgian population was irreproachable, and we refrained from molesting them. When we were to be billeted in a village we sent a patrol to the Mayor, to inform him that the troops would be passing through and that he must have all weapons given up, while he himself and three notables were to place themselves at the disposal of the commandant. After the troops had passed the Mayor and his companions were set at liberty; the weapons were broken up. This, at least, was what happened on the only occasion when I saw the process carried out, for we were never attacked by civilians. We arrived at Dinant on August 23rd. We received orders to march through the town rapidly, for we were wanted on the height on the further side of the Meuse. Our Captain told us that civilians were attacking our troops and that it was necessary to take precautions. As a fact, shots were fired at us from the windows along the streets through which we passed, but we had hardly time to retaliate. Finally, we crossed the Meuse on boats, and we went to take part in the battle against the French troops. On the further side of the Meuse we found a priest with a revolver in his hand; of course he was shot before he had time to fire on us. Personally, I had to return with my unit, to search the houses at Dinant and fetch out the inhabitants by way of precaution, in accordance with orders I had just received. I found it extremely difficult to carry out this mission, for the inhabitants were for the most part hidden in their cellars; but I must say that they did not fire on us. When we had at last captured our prisoners we took them all (men, women and children) to a place on the further side of the Meuse, where they were collected; as far as I can remember it was a country-house (*château*). After leaving Dinant we came upon a great many villages that were partially burnt; the first place after Dinant was entirely destroyed. As regards requisitions in the deserted houses, we took everything the soldiers needed—provisions, body linen, but not often wine; before coming away, we left a note specifying what we had taken, even when there was no one in the house; we were

forbidden to take the linen individually, the company undertook to distribute it among the men. In France I saw a certain number of houses with inscriptions on them ("To be spared"), but I do not know what was the nationality of their owners. I noticed them more particularly at Châlons.

The above having been read over, the witness confirms his statements, declares that he has told the truth, and signs with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar, approving the erasure of eleven unimportant words.

LABORDERIE.

LOUSTALOT.

FUISCHS.

MEISSNER.

No. 15.

Interrogatory under oath, on April 26th, 1915, by M. Cruveillé, Captain, Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 16th Army Corps District, of Löbmann, Johann Emil, German prisoner, aged twenty-seven, bachelor, cashier, domiciled at Leipzig, who deposed as follows :—

I belong to the 11th Company, Captain Freiherr von Gregory, of the 182nd Infantry Regiment of the Saxon Reserve. I do not know the name of the Colonel, nor that of the Major. I left my dépôt on August 11th with my regiment; after passing through Luxemburg we entered Belgium on August 19th or 20th. The first fighting in which we were engaged took place at Dinant. Immediately afterwards I went on the sick list, and I remained with the convoys until September 4th. On that day I was wounded between Mourmelon and Châlons by a bomb dropped on the convoy by an aviator. In consequence of this wound I was transferred to the German ambulance of Mourmelon, where I was on September 13th, when we were obliged to retreat hurriedly. I was taken prisoner on that day. I remained only such a short time in my company that I do not know what took place in it, and I cannot say whether executions, pillage and the burning of houses were carried out by men or by officers. However, I did see our soldiers setting fire to houses, and one day, as we were passing through the streets of Dinant, I saw an adjutant himself kindling a fire by setting light to a bundle of curtains. I do not know the name of this adjutant, who belonged to my regiment, but as he was in my battalion he must have been in the 9th, 10th or 12th company. I saw many civilians shot, and on two occasions in groups of twenty persons, but it was not my regiment which carried out these executions. We only shot two men, who were accused of having killed a Major.

Q.—Your regiment has been notified as having distinguished itself by acts of cruelty, summary executions, and pillage. It is very surprising that you should know nothing of these occurrences.

A.—That may be, but I know nothing because I was only a very short time with my regiment. I never saw anything in the baggage which looked like the proceeds of plunder.

The above having been read over to the witness, he declared that his answers had been faithfully transcribed, and that they contained the truth; he confirmed them, and signed with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

J. MAZOT.

M. CASSAIGNES.

D. CRUVEILLÉ.

Emil LÖBMANN.

No. 16.

Interrogatory under oath, on June 4th, by M. Loustalot, Deputy Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, of Lehmann, Arno Paul, born at Leisnig (Saxony), July 18th, 1890, son of Ehregoff and Augusta Kern; workman by calling, private in the 103rd Infantry Regiment, 7th Company, XIIth Saxon Corps, at present interned at the dépôt for prisoners of war at Blaye (No. 2276), who deposed as follows :—

I was taken prisoner on September 10th, 1914. I belong to the 103rd Infantry Regiment (7th Company, Captain Seyler).

We left Bautzen on August 7th for Belgium. Personally, I have never had any complaint to make against the Belgian population and our company was never attacked by civilians. Once, however, when we were about to take up our quarters in a village, we had a few shots fired at us. We received orders to go into the houses,

and we took some fifteen men, women and children prisoners. The 5th Company, for its part, was exposed to the fire of a machine-gun which was concealed in a house. They besieged the house and took possession of the machine gun. They also set fire to the house, which we saw in flames. Passing through the villages I saw the dead bodies of civilians who appeared to have been shot. I also saw immense numbers of houses that had been plundered, the furniture of which was lying in the streets in heaps. I had no bread to eat for a fortnight ; there was nothing left in the houses ; we searched in vain, everything had been cleared out. We were obliged to feed on rice and roots, carrots, in short anything we could find to put in our mouths. At Dinant, when we passed through on August 23rd, I saw in the square near the church about two hundred civilian corpses. It looked to me as if they were all men, but it was already dark, and perhaps I did not distinguish them very well. The women and children had taken refuge in the church. My company was put on guard in some old barracks, where the civilian prisoners had been placed ; among them there were some women, but I know that these were released on the 24th.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirmed his statements, declared he had spoken the truth, and signed together with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

R. LABORDERIE.

FUISCHS.

J. LOUSTALOT.

A. LEHMANN.

No. 17.

Interrogatory under oath, June 3rd, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Deputy Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, of Jahn, Paul, born at Elsterwerda, November 23rd, 1888, son of the late Karl Paul, and of Krätzschmar, Amalia ; fireman by calling, non-commissioned officer in the 100th Infantry Regiment (Grenadiers), 12th Company, XIIth Corps, at present interned in the dépôt for prisoners of war at Blaye (No. 569), who deposed as follows :—

I was taken prisoner on September 8th, 1914, near Sompuis. I belong to the 100th Infantry Regiment (Grenadiers), 12th Company (Lieutenant von Andersten, commanding the Company from the time when Captain von Römer was wounded, Lieutenant-Colonel von Witzleben). We left Dresden on the night of August 6th to 7th for Belgium. We had no intercourse with the Belgian population till we got to Dinant, for a great many troops had preceded us, and we found the villages deserted. We arrived at Dinant on August 23rd ; we were supporting the artillery when the bombardment began. At about 8 o'clock in the evening we passed through the town. We arrived at a big square, where there was a large building which looked like a convent. Inside this building there were a certain number of the inhabitants under military guard. Our company commander explained to us that these were some of the townspeople whom it was necessary to protect. . . . I do not know against whom, indeed. Our company received orders to collect all these people and take them to the houses on the banks of the Meuse near the Grand Rocher. There were many women and children among them. Every moment prisoners arrived in groups ; there were altogether about 200 persons in the convent. As they had had nothing to eat, I asked our company commander what was to be done to prevent them from dying of starvation, and if it would not be possible to take something for them from the mess of our company ; but he said he had no time to trouble about it, and that we must just go and take food for them from the houses. This I did, and thanks to the provisions I found in the neighbouring houses it was possible to feed them. Our company was on guard for two days, and was charged with the surveillance of the civil population ; we carried out this task, and I merely saw the dead bodies of some civilians, pell-mell with wounded, lying in heaps in the squares ; there were women and children among them, but as we passed rapidly, it is impossible for me to say if they were dead or only wounded ; they were all mixed up together. The town was all in flames at the time. We had been ordered to be on our guard, for it was said that the 1st company of the 1st Battalion, which had preceded us, had been attacked and the captain wounded by a young girl of fourteen ; our captain gave us these details. As to us, our company was never attacked by civilians ; however, I must note that when we began to arrest the inhabitants in accordance with the orders we had received, a few shots were fired at us, but I cannot say whether these came from the inhabitants or were the result of a confusion among our own troops. We

subsequently continued our march through the Belgian country, and we marched uninterruptedly to catch up our regiment. The majority of the villages were still intact. After Mariembourg we were certainly attacked, but I do not know whether it was the inhabitants or the regular troops who fired at us (perhaps it was Turcos, for one of our men who had fallen out to satisfy a natural want saw a Turco rushing at him armed with a pitchfork). The village from which the firing had proceeded (about 3 kilometres from Mariembourg on the main road), was surrounded by our troops and bombarded. I do not know what was done to the inhabitants. In France I did not notice anything unusual. It was at Rethel our company succeeded in rejoining the regiment, by dint of forced marches. Requisitions were made regularly by our company (but I did not take part in any of them). I was never present at any scene of plunder. It was only at Dinant I noticed that many houses had been plundered, and that the beds were lying in the middle of the street.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares that he has spoken the truth, and signs together with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

LABORDERIE.

FUISCHS.

Paul JAHN,

LOUSTALOT.

12 / 100 *Unteroffizier
der Reserve.*

No. 18.

Interrogatory under oath, May 22nd, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Deputy Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, of Jäger, Alfred, born at Hertigswalde, October 12th, 1893, son of Karl August and Mina Hoffmann; a factory hand by calling, private in the 103rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Company, XIIth Corps, at present interned in the dépôt for prisoners of war at Rochefort, who deposed as follows :—

I was made prisoner on September 10th, 1914, near Châlons. I belong to the 103rd Infantry Regiment (3rd Company, Major Teichgräber (dead), Colonel Hoch). We left Bautzen on August 6th for Belgium. The Belgian population received us well, even selling us bread and milk and everything we needed. None of the inhabitants ever fired on us; I certainly heard that civilians had fired on the German troops, but personally I never experienced anything of the sort. We passed through Dinant on August 23rd; the town was on fire, but as we only went through a suburb in the night, I did not notice any dead bodies of civilians. We afterwards crossed the Meuse, and we took the road that led towards France. Nearly all the villages were burnt. I heard it said that a patrol of Hussars had been attacked by civilians in one of the villages where we afterwards passed. Now, according to the story we were told, eleven of these Hussars had been wounded, and these same civilians were said to have cut off their hands. The leader of the patrol in question was even supposed to have had his arms and legs cut off. You must understand that I did not see the atrocities I report with my own eyes, but they were related to us by our officers, to incite us to distrust the inhabitants. The next day, or the day after that, the houses of these civilians had been bombarded by way of example. In such cases it was generally the Artillery which set fire to the houses; as to the Engineers, I know that they too had sometimes to carry out operations of this kind, but as we had very little to do with them I have no knowledge of the material they may have used for the purpose. We got into deserted houses by using jemmies to break open the fastenings if the doors were closed; this was done by order of and under the leadership of an officer. I myself took part in some of these expeditions, but only under orders. We took the provisions we needed, which were distributed among the men, and if there was any body linen we took that too, to replace the worn linen that had been in use since the beginning of the campaign.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares that he has told the truth, and has signed with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

R. LABORDERIE.

VALLADE.

J. LOUSTALOT.

Alfred JÄGER.

No. 19.

Interrogatory under oath, on May 28th, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, assisted by Sergeant Laborderie, Registrar to the said Court-Martial, of Hilse, Arthur, born at Löbtau on January 27th, 1883, son of August and Augustine Röhl; a commercial clerk by profession, private in the 100th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Company, XIIth Saxon Corps, at present interned and in hospital at the dépôt for prisoners of war at Rochefort, who deposed as follows:—

I was taken prisoner on September 11th, 1914. I belong to the 100th Infantry Regiment (3rd Company, Captain von Löben, Major Kielmansegg, Colonel von der Decken). We left Dresden on August 6th for Luxemburg and Belgium. Throughout our passage in Belgium and in France we never had the slightest friction with the population, who, moreover, never fired upon our company. Just before we reached Dinant an order appeared in the bulletin, enjoining us to be careful, as the cavalry had been attacked by civilians in the town itself. We had orders, when the company was on the march, to detail troops of armed men, whose duty it was to enter houses from which shots were fired, and seize the men who had fired them; these were then conducted to the Staff, who pronounced sentence upon them. For my part, I was never present at an execution of civilian prisoners. After traversing Dinant, which was partially in flames, we continued our march towards France, through villages, some of which had been burnt, as fighting had taken place in them. I shared in a search in a deserted house, where by order of our officers we took the provisions we found there; the house was already open when we came to it.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares he has told the truth, and signs with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

R. LABORDERIE.

Arthur HILSE.

Pierre AUSTIER.

LOUSTALOT.

No. 20.

Interrogatory under oath, on June 11th, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, of Hänsel, Hermann, born at Ochsenaal, June 1st, 1881, son of Karl and Amalie Hase; a mason by calling, private in the 103rd Infantry Regiment (7th Company) XIIth Saxon Corps, at present interned in the dépôt for prisoners of war at Trompeloup (No. 41), who deposed as follows:—

I was taken prisoner on September 11th at Sommesous. I belong to the 103rd Infantry Regiment (Reserve). I do not know the names of my officers. We left Dresden on August 14th for Belgium. The behaviour of the population was always quite irreproachable and the inhabitants never fired on us. We were at Dinant on August 23rd; the whole town was burning. I was never present at any execution of civilians. After crossing the Meuse we found villages in flames. The houses had been burnt or pillaged; the doors were broken in, and in some cases the furniture was thrown into the street. There was nothing left in the deserted houses, whose inhabitants had fled before the troops, and it was useless to try to take anything out of them, for many others had passed through before us. We had had no bread ration for several days, so we went into the fields to get something to satisfy our hunger. I encountered convoys of civil prisoners who were being sent to Germany on a good many occasions. At Dinant more especially I noticed over a hundred who were guarded by soldiers.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares that he has told the truth, and signs with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

LABORDERIE.

Hermann HÄNSEL.

Ch. DE STOUTZ.

LOUSTALOT.

No. 21.

Interrogatory under oath, on April 28th, 1915, in the presence of M. Cavillot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecuting Counsel to the Court-Martial of the 12th Army Corps District, assisted by M. Sézille, Robert, Sergeant, Registrar to the said Court, and M. Jaunez, Max, auxiliary Interpreter, aged forty-two, appointed to carry out the duties of Interpreter of the German language, who has taken the oath prescribed

by Article 332 of the Code of Criminal Instruction, of Gläser, Arthur, Corporal in the 100th Infantry Regiment, who, interrogated as to his surname, Christian name, age, condition, profession and domicile,

Answered :—

Surname and Christian name : Gläser, Arthur ; age, twenty-six ; condition, bachelor ; profession, draughtsman ; domiciled at Erlbach, at present Corporal (*Gefreiter*) in the 100th Infantry Regiment of the Reserve, XIIth Saxon Corps, who replied as follows to our various interpellations :—

I was mobilised at Dresden with the 100th Regiment of the Reserve. We left on August 13th or 14th by train by way of Coblenz ; we arrived in Belgium about the 19th or 20th of August ; when I arrived in this country, through which the troops of the active army had already passed, I had an impression of great desolation ; the inhabitants were fleeing either in carts or on foot in an opposite direction.

When I saw these unhappy creatures I felt great pity for them, thinking that the same calamities might have overtaken our own country.

I had passed through ruined villages ; it was heartrending ; there were still a few of the inhabitants left here and there, mainly women.

We never had any cause of complaint against the population.

After crossing the Meuse I saw a large country house (*château*) in which there were civilians who had come in from all sides, especially from the neighbouring villages.

This *château* had been transformed into an ambulance.

After a halt of two hours there, we went on, and not very far from this place we had an engagement ; we had only two wounded.

I did not take part in any other fighting till we came to the camp at Châlons, where I was made prisoner.

I never saw any buildings fired ; I never saw any executions, and I do not know if any were ordered.

I never heard that women had been outraged and children mutilated.

My officers were called : my Major, von Eulitz ; my Lieutenant and acting Captain, von Friesen-Miltitz (active) ; the other Lieutenant, Otto.

The above having been read over to the witness he declares it to be faithfully transcribed, confirms it, and signs together with us, the Registrar and the Interpreter, approving the erasure of twenty-three unimportant words.

Max JAUNEZ.

Robert SÉZILLE.

Arthur GLÄSER.

CAVILLOT.

No. 22.

Interrogatory under oath, on June 11th, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecutor to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, of Grosse, Moritz Alfred Hermann, who, questioned as to his surname and Christian name, stated that he was born at Kötzschenbroda (Dresden) on August 25th, 1891 ; son of Alfred and Alina Pfitze ; by calling a mechanician, private in the 177th Infantry Regiment (4th Company, XIIth Saxon Corps), at present interned at the dépôt for prisoners of war at Trompeloup (No. 98), and deposed as follows :—

I was taken prisoner on September 9th, 1914, at Lenharé.

I belong to the 177th Infantry Regiment (4th Company, Captain Eckhardt, Major von Heygendorff, Colonel Bucher). We left Dresden on August 2nd for Belgium. There were not very many of the inhabitants left in the districts we went through, but no one ever fired on us. We passed through Dinant on the morning of August 24th ; we noticed heaps of corpses, especially near the Grand Rocher ; soldiers and civilians were lying pell-mell, together with women and children, though there were fewer of these ; they had been shot, I do not know by whom. After crossing the Meuse we found villages in flames ; there were many houses with the doors broken open ; there were some the furniture of which was strewn about on the ground ; they appeared to have been pillaged ; in one village especially I saw a house with the doors and windows broken in, which seemed to have been thoroughly sacked. Outside some houses there were furniture vans. I did not take part in the plundering, for we were fully occupied in marching all day (we did from 60 to 70 kilometres a day, in all 460 kilometres), and we did not pay much attention to anything that might have been happening around us. However, I know it was the custom, when provisions were running short, to enter the deserted houses, breaking open the

doors with jemmies ; this, again, I did not do myself, but I know that it was done. I saw on certain houses inscriptions which had been put on the doors : “ *Nicht plündern, gute Leute* ” (“Not to be plundered, good people”). . . . On others there was this inscription : “No one left here !” or, “Shots were fired from this house.”

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares that he has told the truth and signs together with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

Ch. DE STOUTZ.

LOUSTALOT.

LABORDERIE.

Moritz GROSSE.

No. 23.

Interrogatory under oath on May 16th, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecutor to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, of one Göldammer, Max, born at Leipzig, October 21st, 1893, the son of Max and Anna Emienkel, schoolmaster by profession, 182nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Company, XIIth Saxon Corps, at present interned in the dépôt for prisoners of war in Le Château, who deposed as follows :—

I was taken prisoner on September 7th, 1914, at Sompuis. My Captain in the 3rd Company was Captain Pechwell, my Major, Major Thomas, and my Colonel, Colonel H. Francke. My regiment, the 182nd, left Freiburg on August 9th for Belgium. At the beginning in Belgium, the population was peaceful enough, but when we came near Dinant civilians began to fire on our troops (at least so I was told, though I never witnessed this myself). In one village I was told off with a patrol to search the houses, in consequence of shots having been fired on our troops. We had orders to arrest the inhabitants (men, women and children), as they were not to be trusted, and to intern them while the troops passed through ; this we did. In this mission we replaced a battalion of Jägers, who had already collected the civilians they had found, and we went on with the work ; but there were very few left in the houses when we arrived. I do not know what was done afterwards, for as soon as our guard was relieved we went forward. On two different occasions, once in Belgium and also once in France, I saw a charred corpse among the ruins of a house that had been burnt. During the night of August 24th–25th we passed through Dinant, which was still burning. As we continued our march we did not encounter any convoys of civilian prisoners ; we only came upon people who were escaping with their furniture in carts. I was not present at any acts of pillage ; these may have taken place later, but plundering was always strictly forbidden. I did, however, see deserted houses, the doors of which had been forced open, but I do not know by whom. I saw cattle requisitioned ; this was done under the direction of the officers. Still, when the owner was not on the spot, we took the animals all the same, by order of our officers.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares that he has spoken the truth, and when called upon to sign with us, the Interpreter and Registrar, refused to do so.

LABORDERIE.

JONQUIERES, Paul.

LOUSTALOT.

No. 24.

Interrogatory under oath, on June 2nd, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Deputy Prosecutor to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, of Günther, Helmuth, born at Adorf-i-V. (Saxony), August 28th, 1893, son of Georg and Martha Arnold, by profession a student, non-commissioned officer in the 108th Infantry Regiment, 4th Company, XIIth Saxon Corps, at present interned in the dépôt for prisoners of war at Blaye, who deposed as follows :—

I was taken prisoner on September 12th, 1914, at Sompuis. I belonged to the 108th Infantry Regiment (4th Company, Captain Nicolai, Lieutenant von der Decken, Major Wagner, Colonel Count Witztum von Eckstädt, Brigadier-General von Watzdorf. I left Dresden during the night of August 8th–9th for Belgium, going through Luxemburg for two hours. In the beginning the Belgian population behaved irreproachably towards us ; we were billeted on the inhabitants, and no civilian ever fired at us. On August 23rd we came to Dinant ; the bombardment had begun in the morning and the town was burning. Corpses of civilians were

lying in the streets ; personally, I saw about a hundred (I do not remember if there were any women and children among them). They were lying in heaps of about ten, some singly, at the corner of a house. From the wounds in their heads I concluded that they had been shot at Dinant ; I saw some shot myself, but we were not told for what reason. We heard that the women and children had been placed in a convent at Dinant, and kept at the disposal of the military authorities. But as we only passed through the town I do not know what happened afterwards. We crossed the Meuse and arrived at a village to the south of Dinant, where I again saw in the streets corpses of civilians who had been shot. The village had been completely destroyed by our heavy artillery, for I saw oxen lying on the ground, struck down by projectiles. I cannot say whether the village had been set on fire ; I know, indeed, that the Pioneers are provided with incendiary bombs, which are used to set fire to houses from which civilians are supposed to have fired on the troops : I also know that in such cases the civilians in question were put to death, but I did not see any burnt villages subsequently in the route we followed towards France. We arrived at Rocroi ; the last Belgian village through which we passed was Couvin.— In France we found a peaceful population and treated them with consideration. I was not present at any scenes of pillage, but I saw plundered houses, the doors of which had been broken in, and the furniture of which had been thrown out into the street in some cases. As to requisitions, our Captain had them made by an officer with an escort of a few men, who settled with the inhabitants for what was required for the company by means of requisition warrants. In the deserted houses we only took provisions ; I never took part in operations of this kind, but I know that when the doors were fastened they were forced open by jemmies. When cattle were needed they were taken from the fields, or if none were to be found we simply took them out of the stalls. I was never present at executions or at acts of atrocity.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares that he has told the truth, and signs with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

R. LABORDERIE.

M. FUISCHS.

Helmuth GÜNTHER.

LOUSTALOT.

No. 25.

Interrogatory under oath, on April 22nd, 1915, by M. Gavillot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecutor to the Court-Martial of the 12th Army Corps District, assisted by M. Sézille, Robert, Sergeant, Registrar to the said Court, and M. Jaunez, Max, aged forty-two, auxiliary Interpreter, appointed to act as Interpreter of the German language, who took the oath prescribed by Article 332 of the Code of Criminal Instruction, of Flachs, Emil, private in the 100th Infantry Regiment, who, questioned as to his surname, Christian name, condition, profession, and domicile,

Answered :

Surname and Christian name : Flachs, Emil ; age, thirty-four ; condition, married October 30th, 1905, at Dresden ; profession, restaurant keeper ; domiciled at Langburgkersdorf ; at present a private in the 100th Infantry Regiment, 7th Company, XIIth Saxon Corps.

To our various questions Flachs gave the following answers :—

I was called up on the fourth day of the mobilisation and joined my regiment at Dresden.

After remaining a few days at the dépôt we left for Belgium on August 19th.

The regiment to which I belonged was a Reserve regiment, composed entirely of Reservists, but with a cadre of officers both of the Active Army and of the Reserve.

I did not take part in very many engagements, for we were preceded by active troops, who constituted the first line of invasion.

Until we got to Mariembourg I saw no fighting.

When we arrived near this town on August 25th there was an engagement between us and the Belgian and French troops.

The action lasted two hours, after which we entered Mariembourg.

I know that there the officer who was Adjutant to my Major, an officer who held the rank of Lieutenant and whose name I do not know, came and gave orders to set fire to some half-dozen houses, from which, he asserted, Belgian or French soldiers had fired upon ours.

The order was executed in the following manner : The officers appointed eight men in each of their sections to set fire to the houses in question ; these eight men were placed under the direction of a non-commissioned officer, a corporal, or even one of themselves.

They set fire to the houses indicated with matches and straw, and I saw them blazing.

I did not take any personal part in these acts because I was ill with indigestion at the time.

There were no civilians left in Mariembourg with the exception of a poor old woman who was standing on her door-step, and who had a wounded German in her house.

This old woman was crying and guarding the entrance of her home ; I think that no one molested her.

We did not enter any private houses in Mariembourg ; indeed, there was nothing more to take, for our active troops had already gone through before us, and we were even quite surprised to find French and Belgian troops there ; in short, we did not expect to be engaged.

Interrogated : I was never present at any instruction as to the manner in which houses should be set on fire.

I never heard anything about pastilles designed to spread fire rapidly.

Any officer may give orders to set fire to a building, but only the commandant of a unit may give orders to shoot a civilian who has been caught with arms in his hands, firing upon the troops.

I never had an opportunity of witnessing an execution of this kind ; they must have been very rare among the Reserve regiments, which, for the most part, passed through districts already scoured by the active troops.

There is in the camp here a non-commissioned officer called Held, who belonged to the 100th Regiment of the active troops ; he may perhaps have seen more interesting things than I.

I believe he would be willing to speak.

Interrogated : I belong to the 7th Company of the 100th Regiment of Reserves, and I can give the names of two officers of my Company :—

Lieutenant Freund and Hauptmann Ruhle von Lilienstern.

I was taken prisoner at Fère-Champenoise on September 10th, 1914.

I was in an ambulance at the time under treatment for my digestive trouble, and I took no part in the fighting.

We must mention that this deposition was not spontaneously given, and that Flachs, who was very distrustful at first, only gained confidence at last from the assurances of the Interpreter, who made him understand that his statements, whatever they might be, would not bring any punishment upon him.

The above having been read over to the witness, he admits it to be accurate, confirms it, and signs with us and the Registrar, approving the erasure of sixteen unimportant words.

Rob. SÉZILLE.

GAVILLOT.

JAUNEZ.

Emil FLACHS.

No. 26.

Interrogatory under oath, on May 17th, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecutor to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, of Delling, Alfred, born at Augustsburg, January 6th, 1887, son of Emil Heinrich and Zelma Richter, by calling a scene-shifter (103rd Infantry Regiment of the Reserve, 11th Company, XIIth Saxon Corps), at present interned in the dépôt for prisoners of war at Le Château, who deposed as follows :

I was taken prisoner on September 12th at Châlons.

I belong to the 103rd Infantry Regiment (11th Company), which left Bautzen on August 14th, to be equipped at Flöha. We set out for Belgium, where the population behaved irreproachably to us. However, on August 22nd the Lieutenant-Colonel of our regiment caused a carriage to pass along the front of our regiment, in which he told us there were two German Sisters of Mercy, whose hands had been cut off by civilians. (I must admit that, though I saw the carriage, I saw neither the two Sisters nor the mutilated hands.) The Lieutenant-Colonel added that he caused this exhibition to be made as a warning to us to be on our guard against the population, whose attitude towards us was now revealed. It was at Spontin that this incident took place. I think I ought to add that in spite of this I never

knew of any instance in which a civilian of any kind fired upon us and wounded or killed one of us. I saw houses that had been burnt, but I cannot say if the artillery ignited them or if they had been set on fire deliberately. I did not go through Dinant. Pillage was strictly forbidden, and I seem to remember that a man who had plundered a house was taken to the rear and shot. When we were billeted in a place the Captain came in the evening to inspect the billets and note the state they were in, and in the morning the same Captain, before giving the order to march, inspected the billets again to see in what state we had left them. I certainly saw houses with the doors and windows broken in, but I do not know who had been guilty of these acts of plunder, which had been committed before our arrival. Requisitions were carried out under the direction of officers, who superintended them carefully. The population in France received us in a much less hostile manner; they brought us water by the roadside as we passed, and we treated the inhabitants with great consideration.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares that he has told the truth, and, when called upon to sign with us, the Interpreter and Registrar, stated that he was incapable of doing so as his hand was paralysed in consequence of a wound.

LABORDERIE.

P. JONQUIERES.

LOUSTALOT.

No. 27.

Interrogatory under oath, on August 27th, 1915, by M. Cruveillé, Captain, Prosecutor to the Court-Martial of the 16th Army Corps District at Montpellier, of Dietrich, Arthur, German prisoner, aged twenty-two, bachelor, locksmith, domiciled at Dresden. Deposed as follows through the medium of Private Cassagnet, Interpreter:—

I belong to the 12th Company of the 108th active Infantry Regiment, and I was taken prisoner at Mourmelon on September 13th, 1914. I was wounded on September 3rd.

Q.—Did you not take part in executions, pillage, and the destruction or burning of houses? Did you not receive orders on this head from your officers? Can you tell us the names of these officers and the nature of the orders they gave you?

A.—I know that executions and pillage took place in Belgium almost everywhere on our route. I did not take any direct part in these, but I took part in the destruction and burning of buildings. In acting thus we obeyed the orders given to us, which were transmitted to us by Captain Martini, who was commanding our company. We were told that the reason for these acts was the attitude of the civil population, and that we were to treat them with the utmost severity. We were further told that when a shot was fired, or seemed to be fired, from a house, we were, under pain of punishment, to invade the house or any houses from which the shot might have been fired, and shoot or massacre everyone we found in them. It was in carrying out these orders that my company, as well as the other companies of the regiment, destroyed and burned a great many houses in the villages we passed through.

I entered Belgium with my regiment about August 20th; we arrived in Dinant on the 23rd. We could not go through on the first day, and it was not until the following day, August 24th, that we marched through the town without halting. All the houses and entire districts were in flames. On our way we met numerous bands of Engineers, who were coming back in groups from the burning quarters. There was even an entire company of the 12th Pioneers among them, and I gathered from their attitude that these were the men who had just kindled the fire. On the rest of our march through Belgium we passed through many villages, the names of which I do not know, and to which we set fire, acting, as I have already stated, on formal orders from General Elsa, who had said that, whenever people were suspected of firing upon us, we were to shoot them and burn their houses. We set to work as if at drill under the orders and leadership of our officers and non-commissioned officers. We had no incendiary material, and we used straw, or else we set fire to the curtains and hangings.

Q.—Did you not carry off with you certain articles from the houses you burned?

A.—Personally, I took nothing. It was forbidden; but this was only *pro forma*, for our officers winked at it, and I know that several other soldiers who looted freely were not interfered with.

Q.—Can you name the villages in which you committed the acts of pillage you have described ?

A.—I have forgotten the names. I wrote them down in a diary I have since lost. But from August 23rd to September 4th, the date on which I was wounded, these scenes took place every day. We were told that our troops had been fired on, and then we invaded the houses, which we set on fire after having put the inhabitants to death. In France we did not commit any acts of this kind because we marched very rapidly.

Q.—Was it not your custom to enter deserted houses and plunder them ?

A.—Our officers told us to go into empty houses and take what we required to eat, but we only set fire to inhabited houses, the inmates of which refused to give us what we asked.

Q.—Were you not present at, or did you not take part in, executions ?

A.—No, but I know they took place. Thus, at Dinant throughout the evening of August 23rd, I heard volleys ; this surprised me, as the town had been evacuated by the Belgian troops, and the next day, when going through the town, I encountered at various points on the way corpses of civilians piled one upon the other. Each heap consisted of from twenty to thirty bodies. There were no women among them, but comrades who had passed through another quarter told me that they too had seen persons who had been shot, and that there were women and children in the heap.

Q.—Did you not receive orders to finish off the wounded ?

A.—No such order was given to my knowledge, and as far as I know no individual in my company finished off a wounded man, but this was done by other companies of my regiment and by other regiments.

The orders were that whenever the wounded were suspected of having fired upon our soldiers they were to be finished off. While I was in hospital at Mourmelon comrades wounded like myself said that the orders were to finish off the wounded so that they might not fire upon our soldiers.

Q.—What were the names of your Colonel and the officers of your regiment ?

A.—The Colonel was Count Witztum von Eckstädt ; the Major was called Von der Pforte, and the Captain Martini.

The above having been read over to the witness, he declared that his answers had been faithfully transcribed and that they contained the truth. He confirmed them and signed together with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

MAZOT.

CASSAIGNET.

CRUVEILLÉ.

Arthur DIETRICH.

No. 28.

Interrogatory under oath on June 11th, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecutor to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, assisted by Sergeant Laborderie, Registrar to the said Court-Martial, of Dittrich, Hermann, born at Hainewalde on March 14th, 1891, son of Heinrich and Minna Tannert, by calling an agriculturist, private in the 100th Infantry Regiment, 1st Company, XIIth Saxon Corps, at present interned in the dépôt for prisoners of war at Trompeloup (No. 65), who deposed as follows :—

I was taken prisoner on September 10th near Sompuis. I belong to the 100th Infantry Regiment, 1st Company. The Captain was called Legler, the Major, Kielmannsegg. We left Dresden on August 3rd for Belgium. As soon as we arrived in Belgian territory and as far as Dinant all the villages we passed through were deserted, the houses pillaged and mostly burnt ; no civilian ever fired on our company. We arrived at Dinant on August 23rd ; many houses were already on fire ; it was morning when we passed through ; there were a great many corpses ; I noticed more especially one heap of about thirty, men, women and children, principally men. After the Meuse, which we crossed on August 24th, we marched towards France ; the villages we passed through were already in flames, the inhabitants had disappeared, and the houses had been thoroughly pillaged ; the furniture had been ransacked and then thrown down ; it was lying pell-mell in the middle of the rooms. The fires had been kindled either by means of special hand-grenades, which the Pioneers take with them on campaigns (I have seen these, they are generally round, and they are thrown by hand), or by our artillery.

We were four days without rations ; we lived on potatoes, beetroot and carrots which we pulled up in the fields ; it was useless to look for provisions in the houses, even in those that were deserted, for there was nothing left in them.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares that he has told the truth, and signs together with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

LABORDERIE.

DE STORCH.

LOUSTALOT.

DITTRICH.

No. 29.

Interrogatory under oath on May 7th, 1915, by M. Bonnemaison, Captain of Constabulary, in command of the district of Tunis, of Burgdorf, Gottfried, private in the 2nd Battalion of Jägers (Marburg), 4th Company, aged twenty-one, born at Walkenried (Brunswick).

We came up with the Saxons before Dinant. Throughout almost the whole of the campaign we marched in front.

The 108th Regiment was the first to enter Dinant, and was obliged to fall back under the fire of the inhabitants. At the entrance to Dinant there are some saw-mills, and there our battalion made a halt in a meadow. The Headquarters Staff of the Division was in the mill of the saw-pits. I believe the 178th Regiment belonged to this Division. The 3rd Platoon of the 4th Company, to which I belonged, was told off to guard the Headquarters Staff, then in the afternoon our whole battalion entered the town. One company had been sent into the wood, I think it was the 1st. We remained in the town from 5.30 to 7.30 in the evening, then we crossed the Meuse. After this we remained in the wood behind Dinant until the afternoon of Monday. The battalion was employed on Sunday in clearing the forest on the left.

Interrogated : I know that the male inhabitants of Dinant between the ages of seventeen and forty were shot, but I am not aware that it was by our battalion.

Civilians were brought into the meadow opposite the saw-mills and shot without any form of trial. They were civilians who had been seized in the town and brought out by the Saxon soldiers. Only a Sergeant-Major was present. I saw others shot in the town itself. There may have been about forty in the meadow, and the same number in the town.

As to men, I only saw those who were shot.

I do not know what was done with the women and children.

I threw away my note-book as soon as I was wounded.

I was taken prisoner at Sommesous on September 11th.

Signed with us, the deposition having been duly read and translated.

CAMPANA.

BONNEMAISON.

Gottfried BURGDORF.

No. 30.

Interrogatory under oath, May 9th, 1915, by M. Guillaud, Prosecutor, of Brendel, Max, aged twenty-two; birthplace, Leipzig; condition, bachelor; profession, engraver; domiciled, before joining the army, at Leipzig; at present a private in the 101st Saxon Regiment of Grenadiers which was in garrison at Dresden, who deposed as follows:—

I belong to the active army and I was at Dresden at the time when war was declared. We left by train for Luxemburg the very day of the mobilisation. We passed through the Grand Duchy and entered Belgium. We saw plenty of isolated farms and villages which had been burnt; but this is what happened to my battalion: In a village, the name of which I cannot remember, civilians fired from the houses at our troops. The parish priest was taken prisoner, but I think he was released shortly afterwards. In one house we found a man who had been shot there and then, by order of the 1st Lieutenant of my company, who was called Koch. Continuing our march, we entered the town of Dinant. There a very young girl fired a revolver at the Colonel of my regiment—or, no, I am making a mistake, it was at the Major of a battalion of Pioneers, whose name I do not know, and she killed him. Hereupon we received orders to shoot all the civilians we encountered, without distinction of age or sex, and the artillery fired upon houses which it set on fire, and in which many civilians were killed.

These orders were transmitted to the troops from guard to guard. The Commandant of the column was General von Elsa; the Colonel of my regiment

was called Meister ; my Major, von Abeken ; my Captain, von Elsa, son of the General above-mentioned ; my Lieutenant, Schurig. I do not know the names of the officers of the other companies, except Lieutenant Stark. I believe I may declare that no children were mutilated, but I heard later, when I was in France, that women had been violated.

I do not know what you mean by incendiary pastilles, but I admit that in the village where the priest was taken prisoner, and in Dinant, we kindled fires by means of petroleum.

I know that civilian prisoners were deported to Germany, but I never saw civilians placed in front of a firing squad to be shot.

In France I took part in an engagement near Vitry, and I was employed for some time in digging trenches. I was taken prisoner on patrol duty on September 11th.

I must add that we received orders to shoot the civilians of Dinant, not only because a young girl had killed a Colonel and civilians had fired upon regular troops, but also because we had been shown a German soldier with his belly ripped open, tied to a tree, after having been sprinkled with burning pitch, because another soldier had been found, with his feet burnt and his throat cut, in a bakehouse, and because women had thrown burning pitch and boiling water on the soldiers as they passed.

I saw the soldier tied to the tree when he was shown to the troops, and I personally helped to take out the one who was in the bakehouse.

Read, confirms, signs, and we sign.

SERRUS.

WINTZER.

GUILLAND.

BRENDEL.

No. 31.

Interrogatory under oath, June 7th, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecutor of the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, of one Arnold, Emil-Camille, son of the late Karl and the late Magdalena Arnold, by calling an artisan, private in the 108th Rifles, XIIth Saxon Corps, at present interned in the dépôt for prisoners of war at Blaye (No. 1261), who deposed as follows :—

I was taken prisoner on September 10th, 1914, at Sompuis. I belong to the 108th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Company, Captain Elterlein, Colonel Count Witztum von Eckstädt. We left Dresden on August 8th for Belgium, by way of Luxemburg. When we arrived in Belgium the villages were completely deserted, and no civilians ever fired at us. In the villages we passed through from the very first we often found houses that had been burnt down, and in the gardens the corpses of men or of youths of from eighteen to twenty. I also saw houses that had been pillaged, with the furniture lying pell-mell in the courtyard. On August 24th we were at Dinant. The town was in flames. I saw several heaps of corpses (men, women, children, and even cattle). I saw a crowd of civilians of both sexes shut up in a convent. I do not think those who fired upon our troops at Dinant were civilians ; they were more probably regulars. I found some dead bodies of French soldiers in the streets. As we were about to cross the Meuse we passed a convoy of from sixty to eighty civilian prisoners who were being sent to the rear. I cannot say whether they were to be interned or shot. All the villages we came to after leaving Dinant had been pillaged. I never took part in requisitions, for there was nothing to take anywhere.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares that he has told the truth, and signed with us, the Interpreter and Registrar.

LABORDERIE.

FUISCHS, M.

LOUSTALOT.

Emil ARNOLD.

No. 32.

Interrogatory under oath, on May 27th, 1915, by M. Loustalot, Lieutenant, Deputy Prosecutor to the Court-Martial of the 18th Army Corps District, assisted by Sergeant Laborderie, Registrar to the said Court, of Grosse, Paul, born at Bubendorf (Saxony), March 20th, 1891, railway servant, private in the Ambulance Corps (1st Company, XIIth Saxon Corps), assisted by Auscher, Pierre, Military Interpreter of the 8th Colonial Regiment, who swore to translate faithfully.

Deposition : I was taken prisoner on September 10th, 1914, at Sompuis. I belong to the Ambulance Corps (1st Company, Captain Grossmann). We left Dresden on August 8th for Belgium. The behaviour of the Belgian population to us was always irreproachable. No civilian ever fired at us. When we passed through Dinant, on August 25th, I noticed the corpses of civilians lying among those of soldiers in the street ; as it was night-time I could not very well distinguish whether there were women and children among them. The town looked like a town that had been bombarded ; some houses were still burning, but most of the fires were extinguished. I also saw a great many villages that were burnt, but I thought it must have been the artillery which had reduced them to this state. I never passed convoys of civilian prisoners, nor did I ever have to tend civilians, women or children. Nor did I ever have to tend soldiers who had been mutilated by civilians or others, and as far as I know none of my comrades ever had to do so. I was never present at any scenes of pillage, but on two or three occasions I happened to go into houses which had obviously been plundered beforehand. I was not required to take part in making requisitions because I belong to a special service. At Sompuis, where we were taken prisoners in the German ambulance we had installed at the railway station, it had been decided by our superior officers that a Major, an Adjutant and ten men should remain on the spot, and the others went off, beating a retreat with the main body of the column, while we were made prisoners with the wounded we were treating.

The above having been read over to the witness, he confirms his statements, declares that he has told the truth, and signs with us, the Interpreter and the Registrar.

LOUSTALOT.

R. LABORDERIE.

Pierre AUSCHER.

Paul GROSSE.

CHAPTER IV.

List of Victims in the Massacres at Dinant.

No.	SURNAMES AND CHRISTIAN NAMES.	PROFESSION.	DOMICILE.	AGE.
1	Absil, Joseph - - - - -	Factory hand.	Dinant.	46
2	Adnet, Ferdinand - - - - -	Coachman.	"	48
3	Arès, Armand - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	33
4	" Emile - - - - -	Domestic servant.	"	66
5	Alardo, Martin - - - - -	—	Herbuchenne.	17
6	" Marie - - - - -	—	"	18
7	" Isidore - - - - -	Agriculturist.	"	20
8	" Martin - - - - -	"	"	53
9	Amiaux-Laverge, Robert - - - - -	Police officer.	Dinant.	32
10	" Mélanie - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	38
11	Angot, Émile - - - - -	Spinner.	"	48
12	Ansotte, Hector - - - - -	Student.	"	18
13	Balleux-Moulin, Germaine - - - - -	Charwoman.	Neffe-Anseremme.	22
14	" Félix - - - - -	—	"	1½
15	Bailly, Félix - - - - -	Clerk.	Dinant.	41
16	Barse, Gustave - - - - -	Weaver.	"	30
17	Baras, Auguste - - - - -	Student.	Anseremme.	15
18	Barré, Georges - - - - -	Clerk.	Dinant.	55
19	Barthélémy, Jean Baptiste - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	23
20	Barthélémy-Defagne, Gustave - - - - -	"	"	30
21	Barzin, Léopold - - - - -	Pensioner.	"	71
22	Bastin, Herman - - - - -	Porter.	"	33
23	Batteux, Marie - - - - -	Female servant.	"	40
24	Bauduin, Edouard - - - - -	Clerk.	"	42
25	Baujot, Alfred - - - - -	Quarryman.	Anseremme.	46
26	Baussart, Dieudonnée - - - - -	Charwoman.	Dinant.	78
27	Beaujot, Marie - - - - -	—	Anseremme.	5
28	" Marthe - - - - -	—	"	13
29	Berqueman, Gustave - - - - -	—	Dinant.	30
30	Betemps, Maurice - - - - -	—	Anseremme.	19 m.
31	Betemps-Poncelet, Henriette - - - - -	—	"	54
32	Betemps, Auguste - - - - -	Gardener.	"	27
33	Berthulot, Ernest - - - - -	Weaver.	Dinant.	50
34	Bietlot, Jean - - - - -	Shopkeeper.	"	40
35	" Charles - - - - -	Weaver.	"	76
36	Binamé, Alphonse - - - - -	Pavior.	"	37
37	Blanchart, Henri - - - - -	Weaver.	"	48
38	Bouchat, Théophile - - - - -	Merchant.	"	68
39	Bouche, Gustave - - - - -	Shoemaker.	"	53
40	Bouille, Armand - - - - -	Farrier.	"	36
41	Bon, Célestin - - - - -	Lay brother.	"	74
42	Boug, Jean Antoine - - - - -	Monk.	"	60
43	Bourdon, Joseph François - - - - -	Coffee-house keeper.	"	36
44	" Henri - - - - -	Student.	"	17
45	" Jeanne - - - - -	—	"	13
46	Bourdon-Baes, Emma - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	50
47	" Edmond - - - - -	Lawyer's clerk.	"	62
48	Bourdon, Jeanne - - - - -	Dressmaker.	Anseremme.	33
49	Bourdon-Bourguignon, Alexandre - - - - -	Merchant.	Dinant.	74
50	" Célestine - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	70
51	Borgnet, Eugène - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	32
52	Bourguignon, Jean Baptiste - - - - -	Carter.	"	29
53	Bourguignon-Bultot, Marie - - - - -	—	"	39
54	Bourguignon, Edmond - - - - -	—	"	16
55	Bovy, Constant - - - - -	Chauffeur.	"	23
56	" Adèle - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	29
57	Bovy-Defays, Marie - - - - -	—	"	54
58	Bovy, Marcel - - - - -	—	"	4
59	Bulince, Martin - - - - -	Weaver.	"	55
60	" Louis - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	51
61	" Alfred - - - - -	Spinner.	"	26
62	Bultot, Norbert - - - - -	—	Neffe-Anseremme.	9
63	" Norbert - - - - -	Carter.	"	35
64	" Joseph - - - - -	Agriculturist.	Dinant.	29
65	" Laurent - - - - -	"	"	34

No.	SURNAMES AND CHRISTIAN NAMES.	PROFESSION.	DOMICILE.	AGE.
66	Bultot, Jules - - - - -	Agriculturist.	Malaise.	31
67	" Emile - - - - -	Weaver.	Dinant.	39
68	" Alphonse - - - - -	Clerk.	"	20
69	" Camille - - - - -	"	Neffe.	14
70	Bultot-Defrenne, Irénée - - - - -	—	Anseremme.	37
71	B—(?), Ernest - - - - -	—	"	35
72	Bralt, Julien - - - - -	Shoemaker.	Dinant.	33
73	Brihayé, Alfred - - - - -	Hotel waiter.	"	25
74	Broutoux, Emmanuel - - - - -	Clerk.	"	55
75	Calson, Alfred - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	61
76	Capelle, Jean - - - - -	Agriculturist.	Lisogne.	62
77	Cartigny, Henri - - - - -	Day labourer.	Dinant.	25
78	" Hubert - - - - -	Weaver.	"	53
79	" Léon - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	28
80	Capelle, Joseph Martin - - - - -	Porter.	"	44
81	Casagny, Auguste - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	49
82	Cassart, Hyacinthe - - - - -	"	"	43
83	" Alexis - - - - -	"	"	17
84	Chabottier-Delimier, Augustine - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	61
85	Chabottier, Jean - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	38
86	" Jules - - - - -	"	"	18
87	Charlier, Louis - - - - -	"	Bouvignes.	16
88	" Jules - - - - -	Day labourer.	Dinant.	35
89	" Saturnin - - - - -	Clerk.	Neffe-Anseremme.	40
90	" Maurice - - - - -	—	"	16
91	" Anna - - - - -	—	"	15
92	" Georgette - - - - -	—	"	9
93	" Théodule - - - - -	Glazier.	Dinant	48
94	" Auguste - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	50
95	Charlot, Henri - - - - -	Weaver.	"	40
96	Clette, Léon - - - - -	—	"	25
97	Collard-Burton, Léopold - - - - -	Watchman.	Dréhance.	32
98	Collard, Euphrasie - - - - -	—	Anseremme.	75
99	" Jean Joseph - - - - -	"	"	77
100	" Noël Emile - - - - -	Shoemaker.	Dinant.	75
101	" Florent - - - - -	Plasterer.	"	39
102	" Henri - - - - -	—	"	37
103	Colle, Léon - - - - -	Student.	"	16
104	" Henri - - - - -	Painter.	"	22
105	" Camille - - - - -	Shoemaker.	"	47
106	Collignon, André - - - - -	Weaver.	"	30
107	" Louis - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	38
108	" Xavier - - - - -	Weaver.	"	55
109	" Arthur - - - - -	—	"	16
110	" Georges - - - - -	Weaver.	"	16
111	" Victor - - - - -	"	"	46
112	Couillard, Armand - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	34
113	" Noël Auguste - - - - -	Cabinet maker.	"	71
114	Coupienne, Henri - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	38
115	" Joseph - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	36
116	" Emile - - - - -	Brewer.	"	51
117	" Emile Nicolas - - - - -	Shoemaker.	"	54
118	" Camille - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	32
119	" Guillaume - - - - -	Shoemaker.	"	58
120	Corbian, Paul - - - - -	Person of independent means.	"	61
121	Corbisier, Frédéric - - - - -	Stone-dresser.	"	17
122	" Joseph - - - - -	Gasfitter.	"	42
123	Culot, Henri - - - - -	Factory hand	"	48
124	" Gustave - - - - -	—	"	24
125	" Florent - - - - -	Contractor.	Lisogne.	24
126	" Joseph - - - - -	Carpenter.	Dinant.	68
127	" Edouard - - - - -	Merchant.	"	59
128	Croni, Lambert - - - - -	Weaver.	"	46
129	Dachelet, Camille - - - - -	Domestic servant.	Thynes.	20
130	" Zéphirin - - - - -	"	"	17
131	Dandois, Gustave - - - - -	Brewer's workman.	Dinant.	44
132	Daroille, Arthur - - - - -	Clerk.	"	26
133	Deaty, Désiré Joseph - - - - -	—	Anseremme.	74
134	Dauphin, Désiré - - - - -	—	Dinant.	35
135	" Camille - - - - -	—	"	28
136	" Léopold - - - - -	Weaver.	Neffe-Anseremme.	49
137	" Joséphine - - - - -	—	Dinant.	20

No.	SURNAMES AND CHRISTIAN NAMES.	PROFESSION.	DOMICILE.	AGE.
138	Dauphin-Mouton, Justine - - -	Daily worker (female).	Neffe-Anseremme.	76
139	Dehez, Sylvain - - -	Pensioner.	Dinant.	43
140	Dehu, Victorien - - -	—	"	48
141	Deleet-Merlier, Flore - - -	Dealer in early Vegetables.	"	58
142	Delay, Camille - - -	Weaver.	"	48
143	" Georges - - -	"	"	16
144	" Arthur - - -	"	"	20
145	" Emile - - -	"	"	24
146	" Camille - - -	Spinner's assistant.	"	23
147	" Ferdinand - - -	Foreman.	"	44
148	Dellot, Jules - - -	Day labourer.	"	29
149	Deloge, Eugène - - -	—	"	15
150	" Alphonse - - -	—	"	58
151	" Edmond - - -	Butcher.	"	23
152	Delot, Charles - - -	Day labourer.	"	32
153	Delvigne, Jules - - -	Carpenter.	Bouvignes.	48
154	Demuyter, Constant - - -	Shopkeeper.	Dinant.	60
155	Dernotte, Modeste - - -	Factory hand	"	45
156	" Elisée - - -	"	"	41
157	Defrenne, Jean - - -	Roadmender.	Anseremme.	39
158	Dessys, Jules - - -	Shopkeeper.	Dinant.	38
159	Denez, François - - -	Farrier.	Lisogne.	32
160	Disig, Vital - - -	Weaver.	Dinant.	48
161	" Georges - - -	Factory hand.	"	34
162	" Jacques - - -	Day labourer.	"	55
163	" Luc - - -	Factory hand.	"	35
164	" Julien - - -	Marble-cutter.	"	68
165	Diffrang, Emile - - -	Weaver.	"	49
166	Dobbelere, Jules - - -	Confectioner.	"	38
167	Dôme, Adolphe - - -	Teacher.	"	48
168	Domine, Ernest - - -	Roadmender.	Anseremme.	51
169	Donné, Camille - - -	Weaver.	Dinant.	36
170	Donnay, Léon - - -	Painter.	"	36
171	Dony, Adelin - - -	Doorkeeper.	"	70
172	Dubois, Xavier - - -	Hawker.	"	44
173	" Henri - - -	Day labourer.	"	62
174	Duchêne, Emile - - -	Quarryman.	"	43
175	" Ernest - - -	Weaver.	"	55
176	Dujeu, François - - -	Day labourer.	"	39
177	Dupont, fils - - -	—	"	10
178	" Léon - - -	—	"	38
179	" fils - - -	—	"	8
180	Dury, Emile - - -	Shoemaker	"	49
181	Eliet, Arthur - - -	Weaver.	Bouvignes.	56
182	Elvy, Waldor - - -	Schoolmaster.	Lisogne.	37
183	Englebert, Alexis - - -	Day labourer.	Dinant.	61
184	" Victor - - -	"	"	60
185	Etienne, Auguste - - -	Carter.	"	23
186	Eugène, (Emile) - - -	Domestic servant.	Fosses.	29
187	Even-Matagne, Clotilde - - -	Charwoman.	Neffe-Anseremme.	71
188	Evrard, Jean Baptiste - - -	—	Dinant.	38
189	Fabry, Albert - - -	Carpenter.	Anseremme.	44
190	Fallay, Jacques - - -	Merchant.	Dinant.	44
191	Fastrés, François - - -	Mason.	"	68
192	Fauconnier, Auguste - - -	Shopkeeper.	"	39
193	" Théophile - - -	Clerk.	"	44
194	Fauguet, Louis - - -	Hairdresser.	"	30
195	" Théophile - - -	Weaver.	Bouvignes.	52
196	" Antoine - - -	"	"	22
197	Fecheulle, Henri - - -	Plumber.	Dinant.	41
198	" Marcel - - -	Weaver.	"	17
199	" Henri - - -	"	"	46
200	" Joseph - - -	"	"	33
201	Féret, Alphonse - - -	Coachman.	"	38
202	" Louis - - -	—	"	18
203	Fénier, Georges - - -	Weaver.	"	31
204	" Eugène - - -	Shopkeeper.	"	33
205	Fievez-Baudart, Auguste - - -	Painter.	"	59
206	Finfe, Julien - - -	Factory hand.	"	32
207	" Jean Joseph - - -	Day labourer.	"	23
208	Finfe-Didier, Jean Joseph - - -	Quarryman.	"	60
209	Firmin, Alexis - - -	Tailor.	"	19

No.	SURNAMES AND CHRISTIAN NAMES.	PROFESSION.	DOMICILE.	AGE.
210	Firmin, Léon - - - - -	Tailor.	Dinant.	23
211	" Joseph - - - - -	"	"	16
212	" Léon - - - - -	"	"	18
213	Fisette, Auguste - - - - -	Merchant.	"	50
214	Fivet, Auguste - - - - -	Accountant.	"	36
215	" (?) - - - - -	—	Anseremme.	3 w.
216	Flostroy, Émile - - - - -	Baker.	Dinant.	36
217	Flassin-Lelong, Marie - - - - -	—	Neffe-Anseremme.	32
218	Fondine, Pauline - - - - -	—	Dinant.	18
219	" Marcel - - - - -	—	"	15
220	" Robert - - - - -	Weaver.	"	15
221	Fonder, Jean Baptiste - - - - -	Architect.	"	31
222	" François - - - - -	Merchant.	"	62
223	Fortuné, Désiré - - - - -	Coffee-house keeper.	"	32
224	Gaudinne-Minet, Marie - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	45
225	Gaudinne, Alphonse - - - - -	Mason.	"	47
226	" Florent - - - - -	"	"	80
227	" René - - - - -	"	"	18
228	" Jules - - - - -	Weaver.	"	16
229	" Remacle - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	54
230	" Édouard - - - - -	"	"	24
231	Géline, Gustave - - - - -	Carriage builder.	"	28
232	" Georges - - - - -	Railwayman.	"	27
233	Genette, Alfred - - - - -	Weaver.	"	35
234	Genon-Fastrés, Odile - - - - -	Charwoman.	Anseremme.	42
235	Genon, Gilda - - - - -	—	"	1½
236	Genot, Félicien - - - - -	Ironworker.	Dinant.	64
237	Georges, Alfred - - - - -	Weaver.	"	36
238	" Armand - - - - -	Clerk.	"	53
239	" Joseph - - - - -	Weaver.	"	44
240	" Henry - - - - -	Locksmith.	"	68
241	" Camille - - - - -	Baker.	"	36
242	" Jean Baptiste - - - - -	Clerk.	"	28
243	" Alexandre - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	36
244	" Auguste - - - - -	Tailor.	"	39
245	" Adelin - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	34
246	Gérard-Bovy, Anna - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	23
247	Gérard, Joseph - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	77
248	Gendvert, Albert - - - - -	—	"	17
249	" Émile - - - - -	Shoemaker.	"	54
250	Graux, Victor - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	49
251	Gillain, Charles - - - - -	Mechanic.	"	64
252	" Robert - - - - -	Weaver.	"	14
253	Gillet, Jules - - - - -	Marble-cutter.	"	28
254	Goard, Auguste - - - - -	—	Bouvignes.	60
255	Godain, Clément - - - - -	Moulder.	Dinant.	48
256	Godinne, Georges - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	17
257	Goffaux, Pierre - - - - -	"	Godinne.	48
258	" Marcel - - - - -	"	Dinant.	18
259	Goffin, Eugène - - - - -	Brewer's workman.	—	47
260	" Eugène - - - - -	—	—	15
261	Gonge, François - - - - -	Shopkeeper.	Dinant.	25
262	" Léopold - - - - -	Shoemaker.	"	65
263	Grandjean, Désiré - - - - -	—	"	56
264	Grenier, Jean - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	46
265	Grignot, François - - - - -	Clerk.	"	26
266	Guéry-Patard (Mrs.) (?) - - - - -	Charwoman.	Neffe-Anseremme.	(?)
267	Guéry-Wartique, Joseph - - - - -	Clerk.	"	31
268	" Rachel - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	20
269	Guillaume, Émile - - - - -	Schoolmaster.	Dinant.	44
270	Guillaume-Melot, Charles - - - - -	Merchant.	"	38
271	Guillaume-Bénard, Charles - - - - -	Watchman.	"	41
272	Gustin, Marguerite - - - - -	Dressmaker.	Anseremme.	20
273	Habron, Émile - - - - -	Cooper.	Dinant.	31
274	Halloy, Gustave - - - - -	Mason.	"	48
275	Hamblénne, Hubert - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	45
276	Hansens, Alexis - - - - -	Workman.	"	54
277	Hardy, Édouard - - - - -	Weaver.	"	50
278	" Octave - - - - -	Foreman.	"	39
279	Haustenne, Émile - - - - -	Quarryman.	"	30
280	Hautot, Émile - - - - -	—	—	31
281	" Joseph - - - - -	—	—	34

No.	SURNAMES AND CHRISTIAN NAMES.	PROFESSION.	DOMICILE.	AGE.
282	Hénenne, René - - - - -	Weaver.	Dinant.	21
283	Hénenne-Ménisse, Marceline - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	59
284	Hennuy, Constant - - - - -	Weaver.	"	36
285	" Marcel - - - - -	"	"	15
286	" Alexis - - - - -	"	"	43
287	" Jules - - - - -	—	"	13
288	Henrion, Alphonse - - - - -	Weaver.	"	41
289	Henri, Désiré - - - - -	"	"	27
290	Herman, Alphonse - - - - -	"	"	48
291	" Juliette - - - - -	—	Neffe-Anseremme.	(?)
292	" Joseph - - - - -	"	Dinant.	35
293	Hiernaux, Jules - - - - -	Pastrycook.	"	41
294	Himmer, Remy - - - - -	Manager.	"	65
295	Hoprard, Émile - - - - -	Clerk.	"	29
296	Hottelet, Jean - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	36
297	" Georges Marie Catherine - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	54
298	Houbien, Joseph - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	18
299	Houbien-Nanquette, Eugène - - - - -	Landlord.	"	76
300	Huberland, Camille - - - - -	Manager.	"	28
301	Hubert, Octave - - - - -	Police officer.	"	36
302	Hubin, Nicolas - - - - -	Turner.	"	77
303	Jacquemin, Auguste - - - - -	Tailor.	"	51
304	Jacquet, Gustave - - - - -	Agriculturist.	"	23
305	" Théophile - - - - -	Baker.	"	41
306	" Alfred - - - - -	Workman.	"	29
307	" Louis Joseph - - - - -	Weaver.	"	55
308	" Gustave - - - - -	Miller.	"	53
309	" Victor - - - - -	Stone-mason.	"	60
310	" Alexandre - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	70
311	Jacquet-Sarrazin, Hortense - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	70
312	Jacquet, Louis - - - - -	Weaver.	—	36
313	" Joseph - - - - -	Watchman.	Herbuchenne.	45
314	" Pierre - - - - -	Commercial traveller.	Dinant.	65
315	Jassogne, Célestin - - - - -	Shoemaker.	"	26
316	" Théodonné - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	27
317	Jaunniaux, Camille - - - - -	Weaver.	"	44
318	" Georges - - - - -	"	"	18
319	Jaumot, Alexandre - - - - -	Spinner.	"	36
320	Javaux-Polet, Félicité - - - - -	Charwoman.	Anseremme.	46
321	Joris-Lamard, Marie - - - - -	"	Dinant.	31
322	Junius, Jean - - - - -	Mechanic.	"	43
323	" Prosper - - - - -	Teacher.	"	51
324	Kestemont, François - - - - -	Waiter.	"	28
325	Kinif, Joseph - - - - -	Pastrycook.	"	61
326	Kinique, Edmond - - - - -	Merchant.	"	56
327	" Edmond (Mrs.) - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	55
328	" Louise - - - - -	"	"	24
329	Laffüt, Isidore - - - - -	Foreman.	Bouvignes.	48
330	Laforêt, Louis Alphonse - - - - -	Brewer.	Dinant.	55
331	" Alphonse - - - - -	"	"	31
332	" Joseph - - - - -	Weaver.	Bouvignes.	37
333	" Camille - - - - -	Day labourer.	Dinant.	18
334	" Alphonse - - - - -	Weaver.	"	34
335	" Auguste - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	23
336	Lagneau, Ernest - - - - -	"	"	67
337	Lahaye, Joséphine - - - - -	—	"	75
338	" Joseph - - - - -	Pastrycook.	"	55
339	" Joseph Eugène - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	47
340	Lambert, François - - - - -	Weaver.	"	45
341	" Victor - - - - -	Brewer's workman.	"	43
342	" Louis - - - - -	Cooper.	"	32
343	Lamour, Émile - - - - -	Cabinet maker.	"	27
344	Lebrun, Alphonse - - - - -	Tailor.	"	33
345	" Henry - - - - -	Porter.	"	48
346	" Joseph - - - - -	Tailor.	"	19
347	Leclerc, Olivier - - - - -	Agriculturist.	Lisogne.	53
348	" Pierre - - - - -	"	"	25
349	Lecocq, Louis - - - - -	Organist.	Dinant.	53
350	Legros-Thonon, Marie - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	51
351	Lejeune, Charles - - - - -	Turner.	"	20
352	Lemaire, Jean - - - - -	Tailor.	"	41
353	Lemer, François - - - - -	Plasterer.	"	53

No.	SURNAMES AND CHRISTIAN NAMES.	PROFESSION.	DOMICILE.	AGE.
354	Lemaire, Edmond — — — —	Butcher.	Dinant.	42
355	„ Camille — — — —	Clerk.	„	17
356	„ Charles — — — —	—	Anseremme.	13
357	Lemineur, Jules — — — —	Locksmith.	Dinant.	44
358	Lempereur, Jeanne — — — —	—	Neffe-Anseremme.	16
359	Lenain, Théodule — — — —	Clerk.	Bouvignes.	17
360	„ Théodule — — — —	Weaver.	Dinant.	40
361	Lenel, Auguste — — — —	Hairdresser.	„	21
362	Lenoir, Hector — — — —	Day labourer.	„	58
363	Lepage, Camille — — — —	Domestic servant.	„	53
364	Lupsin, Alphonse — — — —	Quarryman.	„	59
365	Libert, Florent — — — —	—	„	21
366	„ Nestor — — — —	Coachman.	Dorinnes.	30
367	Limet, Alphonse — — — —	Weaver.	Dinant.	46
368	Lion-Lepas — — — —	Tailor.	„	40
369	Lion-Naus, Joséphine — — — —	Charwoman.	„	67
370	„ „ Joseph — — — —	Printer.	„	69
371	Lion, Alexis — — — —	Plasterer.	„	41
372	„ Arthur — — — —	Weaver.	„	26
373	„ Amand — — — —	Watchmaker.	„	63
374	„ Joseph — — — —	Clerk.	„	28
375	„ Jules — — — —	—	„	27
376	Lisoir, Camille — — — —	Cooper.	„	33
377	„ Pierre — — — —	Agriculturist.	„	71
378	Longirle, Félix — — — —	Police inspector.	„	63
379	Louis, Vital — — — —	Factory hand.	„	18
380	„ Désiré — — — —	—	„	20
381	„ François — — — —	Weaver.	„	50
382	„ Benjamin — — — —	„	„	18
383	„ Xavier — — — —	—	„	50
384	Mouteau, Edmond — — — —	Coffee-house keeper.	„	70
385	Marchal, Jules — — — —	Shopkeeper.	„	27
386	„ Henry — — — —	Tailor.	„	18
387	„ Michel — — — —	„	„	50
388	„ Camille — — — —	„	„	44
389	Marchot, Gilda — — — —	—	Anseremme.	2
390	„ Joseph — — — —	Quarryman.	„	46
391	Marette-Sanglier, François — — — —	Weaver.	Dinant.	42
392	Marette-Gaudine, Hubert — — — —	Clerk.	„	38
393	Marine, Lambert — — — —	Brewer.	„	55
394	Marsigny, Madeleine — — — —	—	„	22
395	Martin, Alphonse — — — —	—	Evrehailles.	68
396	„ Joseph — — — —	Factory hand.	Dinant.	23
397	„ Pierre — — — —	Cutler.	„	60
398	„ Marie — — — —	Factory hand. (female)	„	17
399	„ Henriette — — — —	Factory hand. (female)	„	19
400	Masson, Camille — — — —	Foreman.	„	42
401	„ Victor — — — —	„	„	39
402	Materne, Jules — — — —	Day labourer.	„	70
403	Materne-Taton, Ferdinande — — — —	Charwoman.	„	62
404	Mathieux, François — — — —	Tailor.	„	23
405	„ Auguste — — — —	Messenger.	„	67
406	„ Émile — — — —	Mechanic.	„	51
407	„ Eugène — — — —	Brewer.	„	69
408	Maudoux, Armand — — — —	Sizer.	„	46
409	Mauris, Octvae — — — —	Brewer's workman.	„	31
410	Maury, Edouard — — — —	Farrier.	„	48
411	Masy, Joseph Julien — — — —	Mason.	„	55
412	Mazy, François — — — —	Carpenter.	„	49
413	„ Lucien — — — —	Weaver.	„	26
414	„ Ulysse — — — —	Tailor.	„	41
415	Mena, Charles — — — —	Docker.	„	39
416	Mercenier, Nicolas — — — —	Domestic servant.	„	72
417	Meurat, Émile — — — —	—	Neffe-Anseremme.	7
418	„ Éva — — — —	—	„	6
419	„ Joséphine — — — —	—	„	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
420	Meurat-Delieux, Marie Thérèse — — — —	Charwoman.	„	38
421	Meurat, Alfred — — — —	Shoemaker.	Dinant.	40
422	Michat, Andrée — — — —	„	„	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
423	Michel, Léon — — — —	Rag-picker.	„	49
424	„ Lambert — — — —	Baker.	„	63

No.	SURNAMES AND CHRISTIAN NAMES.	PROFESSION.	DOMICILE.	AGE.
425	Michel, Léon - - - - -	Clerk.	Dinant	36
426	" Jules - - - - -	Shopkeeper.	"	39
427	" Émile - - - - -	Tailor.	"	27
428	Migeotte, Adolphe - - - - -	Brewer's workman.	"	62
429	" Émile - - - - -	Coachman.	"	32
430	" Constant - - - - -	—	"	14
431	" Louis - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	50
432	" Camille - - - - -	Weaver.	"	19
433	" Henri - - - - -	—	"	16
434	Milcamps, Lucien - - - - -	Pensioner.	Bouvignes.	68
435	" Jules - - - - -	Lock-keeper.	Dinant.	35
436	Modave, Nestor - - - - -	Agriculturist.	Lisogne.	40
437	Monard, Jules - - - - -	Person of independent means.	Dinant.	79
438	Monin, Nicolas - - - - -	Baker.	"	56
439	" Jean Baptiste - - - - -	Weaver.	"	47
440	Monin-Vanheden, Pauline - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	55
441	Monin, Alphonse - - - - -	—	"	14
442	" Henri - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	28
443	" Félix - - - - -	Weaver.	"	53
444	" Raphaël - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	26
445	" Hyacinthe - - - - -	Weaver.	"	53
446	" Eugène - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	19
447	" Jules - - - - -	Brewer.	"	40
448	Monin-Légo, Arthur - - - - -	Weaver.	"	25
449	Monty, Alexandre - - - - -	Bricklayer.	Dinant.	39
450	Morelle, Joseph - - - - -	Carter.	Neffe-Anseremme.	69
451	Morelle-Pinsmaille, Marie - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	49
452	Morelle, Marguerite - - - - -	—	"	11
453	" Jules - - - - -	Student.	"	17
454	Mossiat, François Jules - - - - -	Cellarman.	Dinant.	38
455	" Frédéric - - - - -	Confectioner.	"	27
456	Mosty, Isidore - - - - -	Brewer.	"	58
457	Mouton, Jules - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	48
458	" René - - - - -	—	"	19
459	Neuret, Auguste - - - - -	Weaver.	"	22
460	Nans, Charles - - - - -	Mechanic.	"	57
461	Nepper, Louis - - - - -	Merchant.	"	42
462	" Émile - - - - -	—	"	16
463	" Émile - - - - -	Butcher.	"	41
464	Nicaise, Léon - - - - -	Person of independent means.	"	75
465	" Gustave - - - - -	"	"	77
466	Noël, Alexis Joseph - - - - -	—	"	40
467	Pairoux, Alfred - - - - -	Butcher.	"	45
468	Panier, Fernand - - - - -	Chemist.	"	38
469	Paquet, Louis - - - - -	—	"	34
470	" Armand - - - - -	Turner.	"	27
471	" Armand - - - - -	Workman.	"	30
472	" Marie - - - - -	—	Anseremme.	19
473	Patigny, Henri - - - - -	Clerk.	Dinant.	47
474	" Jean Baptiste - - - - -	Drayman.	"	43
475	Pécasse, Joseph - - - - -	Quarryman.	"	38
476	" Florent - - - - -	Turner.	"	56
477	Péduzy, Désiré Joseph - - - - -	Cooper.	"	50
478	Peres, Vilazo Viceste - - - - -	Domestic servant.	"	20
479	Perreux, Nicolas - - - - -	Monk.	"	40
480	Pestiaux (?) - - - - -	—	Sorinnes.	(?)
481	Philippart, Jean - - - - -	Cutter.	Dinant.	59
482	Piérard, Olivier - - - - -	Person of independent means.	"	67
483	Piette, Jean Baptiste - - - - -	Baker.	"	45
484	" Adrien - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	73
485	" Adrien - - - - -	Commercial traveller.	"	20
486	Pinsmaille, Charles - - - - -	Pressman.	"	34
487	" Andrée Marie - - - - -	Market gardener.	Neffe-Anseremme.	88
488	" Adèle - - - - -	Dressmaker.	Dinant.	44
489	Piraux, Adelin - - - - -	Cattle-dealer.	Lisogne.	32
490	Pire, Hubert Émile - - - - -	—	Dinant.	53
491	" Antoine - - - - -	Weaver.	"	21
492	Piret, Victor - - - - -	Postman.	"	63
493	" Victor - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	47

NO.	SURNAMES AND CHRISTIAN NAMES.	PROFESSION.	DOMICILE.	AGE.
494	Pirot, Joseph - - - - -	Mattress-maker.	Dinan.	38
495	Polito, Léon - - - - -	Weaver.	"	37
496	" Joachim - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	32
497	Pollet, Auguste - - - - -	Quarryman.	Anseremme.	43
498	Pollet-Deskène, Julie - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	36
499	Pollet, Nelly - - - - -	—	"	1
500	" Édouard - - - - -	—	Neffe-Anseremme.	15
501	Poncelet, Victor - - - - -	Founder.	Dinant.	41
502	" Élie - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	61
503	" Pierre - - - - -	Weaver.	"	32
504	" Gustave - - - - -	Gasfitter.	"	22
505	Prignon, Octave - - - - -	Rate collector.	"	40
506	Poncin, Jules - - - - -	—	Spontin.	48
507	Questiaux, Fernand - - - - -	Weaver.	Dinant.	51
508	Quoilin, Anselme - - - - -	Clerk.	"	53
509	" Anselme - - - - -	"	"	28
510	" Antoine - - - - -	Foreman.	"	55
511	" Fernand - - - - -	Clerk.	"	33
512	" Nicolas - - - - -	Foreman.	"	59
513	Rameux, Léopoldine - - - - -	Weaver (female)	"	20
514	Ravet, François - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	50
515	" Jean Joseph - - - - -	Turner.	"	39
516	" François - - - - -	"	"	37
517	Remaille, Victor - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	66
518	Renard, Albert - - - - -	Coachman.	"	27
519	Riffard, Nestor - - - - -	Weaver.	"	55
520	Roba, Simon - - - - -	Policeman.	"	18
521	Rodrique-Muite, Nelly - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	24
522	Rodrique, Jean - - - - -	—	"	5 m.
523	Rolin, Jules - - - - -	Croupier.	"	43
524	Romain, Henri - - - - -	Domestic servant.	"	30
525	" Camille - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	40
526	Ronvaux, Émile - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	65
527	" Jean - - - - -	"	"	38
528	Roucoux, Edmond - - - - -	Schoolboy.	"	17
529	" Maurice - - - - -	"	"	16
530	Rouffionge, Charles - - - - -	Mason.	"	68
531	" Désiré - - - - -	Weaver.	"	32
532	Roulin, Henriette - - - - -	—	Neffe-Anseremme.	12
533	" Joseph - - - - -	Shopkeeper.	"	23
534	Rousseau, Léon - - - - -	Delegate.	Dinant.	32
535	Sanglier, Gérard - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	37
536	Sauvage, Joseph - - - - -	Weaver.	"	28
537	" Auguste - - - - -	—	"	22
538	Schelback, Jules - - - - -	Harness-maker.	"	59
539	Schram-Toussaint, Marie - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	66
540	" Égide - - - - -	Turner.	"	64
541	Schram, Arthur - - - - -	—	"	28
542	Seghuin, Jules - - - - -	Weaver.	Bouvignes.	67
543	Seha, Vital - - - - -	Tailor.	Dinant.	59
544	Servais, Georges - - - - -	Cabinet-maker.	"	26
545	" Louis - - - - -	—	"	18
546	" Jules Adolphe - - - - -	Pensioner.	"	63
547	" Léon - - - - -	Baker.	"	23
548	Sollerun, Zénobe - - - - -	"	"	33
549	Somme, Grégoire - - - - -	Shoemaker.	"	48
550	" Paul - - - - -	Carpenter.	"	39
551	" Léon - - - - -	Electrician.	"	18
552	" Adelin - - - - -	—	"	25
553	" Hyacinthe - - - - -	—	"	26
554	Sonet, Émile - - - - -	Cook.	"	32
555	Sorée, Vital - - - - -	—	"	15
556	Stévaux-Anciaux, Euphrosine - - - - -	Person of independent means.	"	85
557	Struvay-Pollet, Marie - - - - -	Public-house keeper.	Anseremme.	36
558	Struvay, Claire - - - - -	—	"	2
559	Sibret, Alfred - - - - -	—	Dinant.	18
560	Simon, Auguste - - - - -	Basket-maker.	"	22
561	" Florian - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	39
562	" Étienne - - - - -	Foreman.	"	78
563	" Léon - - - - -	Painter.	"	55
564	Simonet, Arthur - - - - -	Clerk.	"	47

No.	SURNAMES AND CHRISTIAN NAMES.	PROFESSION.	DOMICILE.	AGE.
565	Simonet, Félix - - - - -	Marble-cutter.	Dinant	72
566	Sinzot, Léon - - - - -	Railwayman.	"	43
567	Texhy, Jean - - - - -	Spinners' assistant.	"	39
568	Thianche, Joseph Désiré - - - - -	Founders' workman.	"	30
569	Thibaut, Maurice - - - - -	Schoolboy.	"	15
570	Thyrifaye, Lambert - - - - -	Person of independent means	"	33
571	Thomas, Joseph - - - - -	Baker.	"	33
572	Toussaint-Delimoy, Marie - - - - -	Charwoman.	"	81
573	Toussaint-Pirlot, Félicie - - - - -	"	"	67
574	Toussaint, Louis - - - - -	Weaver.	"	32
575	" Joseph - - - - -	Turncock.	"	24
576	" Benoit - - - - -	Weaver.	"	56
577	" Hélène - - - - -	Charwoman.	Neffe-Anseremme.	33
578	Trinteler, Eugène - - - - -	Day labourer.	Dinant.	47
579	Van Buggenhout, Jean - - - - -	Puddler.	"	37
580	Vanderhaegen, Arthur - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	36
581	Vaugin, Augustin - - - - -	Coachman.	"	64
582	Verenne, Arthur - - - - -	Weaver.	"	24
583	" Marcel - - - - -	Cabinet-maker.	"	17
584	" Georges - - - - -	Clerk.	"	20
585	" Arthur - - - - -	Carrier.	"	48
586	Vilain, Alexandre - - - - -	Merchant.	"	40
587	" Fernand - - - - -	Music teacher.	"	34
588	Vinstock, Jules - - - - -	Schoolboy.	"	15
589	" Frédéric - - - - -	Brewer.	"	57
590	" Fernand - - - - -	—	"	25
591	" Louis - - - - -	—	"	20
592	Warnont, Alzire - - - - -	Day labourer.	"	34
593	" Félix - - - - -	—	"	24
594	" Pierre - - - - -	Pedlar.	—	(?)
595	Warzée-Servais, Octave - - - - -	Foreman.	Anseremme.	47
596	Wasseige, Jacques - - - - -	—	Dinant.	19
597	" Pierre - - - - -	—	"	20
598	" Xavier - - - - -	Banker.	"	43
599	Watrice, Emile - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	28
600	Wilmotte, Camille - - - - -	Cashier.	Schaerbeek	23
601	Winand, Victor - - - - -	Shoemaker.	Dinant	30
602	" Antoine - - - - -	Tailor.	"	36
603	Zuollen, Henri - - - - -	Weaver.	"	43
604	" Georges - - - - -	"	"	15
605	" Edouard - - - - -	Factory hand.	"	38
606	(?) Calixte - - - - -	Hotel waiter.	Celles	(?)

CLASSIFICATION OF THE VICTIMS BY SEX AND BY AGE.

Masculine sex - - - - -	535
Feminine sex - - - - -	71
	<hr/> 606
Under 5 years old - - - - -	11
From 5 to 9 years old - - - - -	6
From 10 to 15 years old - - - - -	22
16 and 17 years old - - - - -	27
From 18 to 49 years old - - - - -	373
From 50 to 59 years old - - - - -	76
From 60 to 69 years old - - - - -	52
From 70 to 79 years old - - - - -	30
Above 80 years old - - - - -	4
Age unknown - - - - -	5
	<hr/> 606

CHAPTER V.

THE SACK AND MASSACRES AT LOUVAIN.*

PART I.

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

August 18th, 1914.—The entry of German troops into Louvain had been imminent from August 18th, 1914. The Burgomaster, M. Colins, had notices posted on the walls of the town exhorting the inhabitants to keep calm.

August 19th.—On the morning of August 19th he sent police agents and Civic Guards into the more populous quarters to request people to place any arms they might have by them in the hands of the Town Council.

A final contest took place towards noon at the entry to the town at the Tirlemont Gate, between the German advance-guard and the rear-guard covering the retreat of the Belgian army.

At about 2 o'clock the first German soldiers entered Louvain by the Rue des Joyeuses-Entrées.

The German *parlementaires* appeared at the Town Hall. They at once made a requisition, couched in coarse, brutal terms, of large supplies of eatables to the value of over 100,000 francs. They insisted upon the delivery within 48 hours of over 40,000 kilos of meat and 51 casks of wine.

At about 2.30 p.m. the main body of the German army made its triumphal entry into the almost deserted streets of the town. The troops marched along the Rue de la Station and through the main streets. In Rue de Tirlemont the singing and playing became particularly animated in front of the military hospital, where they were bringing in the Belgian soldiers wounded at Boutersem and in the neighbourhood of Louvain. The Germans gave the greatest proof of their unseemly brutality when in the presence of members of the Red Cross. Towards evening an officer threatened with death a priest belonging to a field-hospital and a lady wearing the Red Cross armlet.

The Palais de Justice was occupied by the German Headquarters Staff.

The troops were billeted on the inhabitants in preference to the barracks and school buildings, which had been put at their disposal by the town authorities, but which were left unoccupied. The soldiers forced their way into the houses that had been abandoned by their owners, and pillaged some of them, notably those belonging to Professors van Gehuchten and Sencie.

August 20th.—M. van der Kelen, a senator and alderman of the town, was taken to Brussels, where he was to be put into touch with M. Max, Burgomaster of Brussels. Upon his return in the afternoon he was taken as hostage, together with M. Schmit, alderman of Louvain. Both were detained in the Town Hall. M. Colins, the Burgomaster, who had been obliged to take to his bed, was kept in his own house. Numerous notices were placarded about the town. One of them proclaimed that every person retaining arms was to hand them over, on pain of death.

The people continued to suffer the occupation of their town calmly and resignedly.

In the course of the day an officer came to negotiate with the town authorities about the payment of a war-tax of 100,000 francs, which, after a discussion, was reduced to a sum of 3,000 francs, payable on the same day. The Town Hall was occupied by German troops. The ante-chamber was strewn with straw. In spite of the danger of fire and the remonstrances addressed to them, the soldiers smoked there continually.

* See also the work *L'Armée allemande à Louvain en août, 1914, et le Livre Blanc allemand du 10 Mai, 1915* (published by the "Institut militaire belge de Ré-éducation professionnelle," at Port-Villez, Seine-et-Oise, 1916). Published under the auspices of the Belgian Government, this work reproduces two documents which contain a definite refutation of the charges made in the "White Book" concerning events at Louvain. They define and complete many points dealt with by the Government.

Friday, August 21st, to Saturday, August 22nd.—The German authorities caused a proclamation to be posted up announcing the destruction of towns and villages whose inhabitants fired on German troops, and stating that the Belgians had abandoned themselves to “acts of the most deplorable cruelty.” This proclamation was printed in type that was not in use in Belgium and seemed to have been drawn up prior to the entry of the German troops into Belgian territory. It was followed by a new edict enjoining the population, under the severest penalties, to bring all fire-arms to the Town Hall. All that remained in the town were at once deposited there.

The military authorities continued to make substantial requisitions. The relations between the Belgian authorities and the German Commandant Forster, remained very courteous. Other officers, on the other hand, were coarse and insolent. One of them threatened Alderman Schmit with the destruction of the town if two Belgian flags were not immediately taken down.

Officers and men went into the shops and demanded articles for their personal use. They gave, in exchange, warrants bearing the words: “Payable by the town of Louvain,” or “Payable by the Belgian Government.”

Monseigneur Ladeuze, Rector of the University, M. de Bruyn, Vice-President of the Tribunal, and M. Van den Eynde, notary and member of the Provincial Council, were detained as hostages.

Sunday, August 23rd.—The military authorities had set at liberty, immediately upon their arrival at Louvain, delinquents of German nationality, who were prisoners in the second division. Among these were nine individuals who had been condemned for breaches of the common law; certain of them had been sentenced for swindling and theft and one for criminal immoralities (acts of bestiality).

These men were now parading the town and threatening their former warders. At the request of the Public Prosecutor of Louvain, the German Commandant had these individuals sent for, and ordered them to be shut up in the barracks. Of the nine offenders against the common law, six only were found and detained in barracks.

The Commandant placed the Law Courts at the disposal of the judicial authorities, and expressed his desire not to interfere with the course of justice.

On his arrival at the Town Hall the Commandant was informed by the communal authorities that the German soldiers had found their way into the communal museum, had smashed the cupboards containing medals and antique coins, and had stolen the contents.

Monday, August 24th.—At the request of the judicial and administrative authorities, the Commandant consented to take no more hostages. He demanded, however, that a fresh proclamation should be issued by the Burgomaster to the people, and that the clergy should exhort them to be calm. When the text of the proclamation was submitted to him, he insisted upon keeping hostages a day or two longer on account of the passage of numerous troops through the town.

The military authorities went to the private banks and seized their cash: 500 francs at the Banque de la Dyle, and 12,000 francs at the Banque Populaire.

German soldiers, and even some of the officers, went to the shops and made the tradespeople hand over to them, in exchange for a warrant, “Payable by the town,” all the German cash they had in their possession.

At about 9.30 p.m. some German officers, followed by their men, went to the Burgomaster's house. In the most brutal manner they compelled him to guarantee the working of the train services. In spite of his protestations they took him away with them. As they went, the Burgomaster succeeded in explaining to the officers that the running of the railways in Belgium has nothing to do with the communal services. Nevertheless, the Burgomaster was conducted to the station and taken before a colonel, who seemed to be intoxicated. The latter called up his men and asked them if they were hungry. They replied that they were, and he gave the Burgomaster injunctions to supply them with provisions within an hour, adding: “If we have not got what we need in an hour's time, we shall know what to do.” The required supplies were collected from the houses in the district. Then the colonel, who seemed in a state of growing excitement, demanded mattresses for his men and for himself. Meanwhile, the Commandant had been informed of what was going on, and came to the station. He intervened with the colonel and had the Burgomaster liberated.

Monday, August 25th.—Alderman Schmit reported on the incidents of the evening before to Major von Manteuffel, who had taken over the duties of Commandant.

The Major begged him to express his regrets to the Burgomaster and his family, as well as to the population of Louvain. Shortly after this Commandant Forster came to take leave of the administrative and judicial authorities.

At about 2 o'clock on the afternoon of August 25th, German troops entered the town and took up their quarters in the houses of the inhabitants.

The Belgian army made a sortie from the entrenched camp of Antwerp and attacked the German army, which was placed on the look-out in front of Antwerp.

Towards 5 o'clock the noise of the cannon from the direction of the village of Hérent could be heard very plainly at Louvain. The field-hospitals were told to expect the arrival of numerous wounded that night. At about 6 the alarm was sounded and the troops that had arrived that afternoon left the town in great haste. After their departure Louvain recovered its aspect of calm and tranquillity.

At nightfall, horses, saddled but riderless, galloped wildly through the town.*

The German troops, repulsed by the Belgian army, returned in disorder.

Shots were exchanged between these troops and those who were in Louvain.

At this moment a lively fusillade broke out simultaneously at different points in the town, notably at the Brussels Gate, the Tirlemont Gate, the Rue Léopold, the Rue Marie-Thérèse and the Rue des Joyeuses Entrées.

The German soldiers were shooting in every direction in the almost deserted streets. In the Rue Vital-Decoster, in particular, a girl was struck by a bullet and fell; three soldiers came up and finished her off.

Soldiers made their way into the houses and gardens and shot into the streets, thereby increasing the disorder and confusion.†

Shortly afterwards fires broke out in all parts, notably in the University Halles, containing the Library and Archives of the University, in the Church of Saint-Pierre, in the Place du Peuple, Rue de la Station, Boulevard de Tirlemont and Chaussée de Tirlemont.‡

By order of their leaders the German soldiers broke in the doors of the houses and set fire to them. They fired on the inhabitants who attempted to leave their dwellings. Several people who had taken refuge in their cellars were burnt alive; others were struck by bullets as they were trying to escape from the conflagration.

Father Parijs, of the Order of the Dominicans, Dr. Meulemans, and M. Deconinck, a chemist, had gone, during the evening, to the Town Hall, to ask for permits to go through the town during the night in the service of the wounded at the field hospital in the Rue Juste-Lipse; Major von Manteuffel was preparing to give them these passes when, at 8 o'clock (Belgian time), the fusillade broke out. The Major took the Father, the doctor and the chemist into custody, and had Alderman Schmit sent for from his residence. On the arrival of the latter the Major announced that a revolt had just broken out in the town, and invited Father Parijs, M. Schmit and Monseigneur Coenraets, chief Vice-Rector of the University, who had been detained as hostage, to issue proclamations to the people exhorting them to calm, and threatening to impose a fine on them of 20,000,000 francs, to destroy the town, and to have the hostages hanged. Guarded by a few officers and about 30 soldiers, Major von Manteuffel, Father Parijs, M. Schmit and Monseigneur Coenraets, set out in the direction of the station. The Alderman and the Dominican made the proclamations at the street corners, the former in French, the latter in Flemish. When they arrived at the house of Baron Orban de Xivry, President of the Red Cross, Major von Manteuffel requested that he would accompany him. A hundred yards further on, near the statue of Justus Lipsius, the party was met by Dr. Berghausen. He announced, in great excitement, that a German soldier had just been killed by a bullet fired from the house of M. David-Fischbach. Addressing himself to the soldiers, he cried: "The blood of the whole population of Louvain is not worth one drop of the blood of a German soldier." The hostages at once protested, and

* See documents 3, 8, 20 (Part III of this chapter).

† This fact was witnessed at various points of the town, notably in the south, at the Rue de Namur, by Monseigneur Ladeuze, Rector of the University, who, on Wednesday, August 26th, saw German soldiers firing from the Arenberg Institute; in Rue de la Station, by M. Giele, an engraver (Document 4); Rue des Joyeuses-Entrées, by Mlle. X.—(Document 2); Rue Léopold, at 8.15 p.m. on Tuesday, August 25th, by M. Léon Verhelst, Professor at the University.

‡ The fires had been systematically lighted everywhere. Inside the Church of Saint-Pierre pyres made of piled-up chairs had been lighted in the choir and the side chapels of the great central nave. The famous pictures by Bouts—the "Last Supper" and the "Martyrdom of St. Erasmus"—were in one of the chapels around the choir. The fire did not spread to this chapel. The pictures were taken away after the burning of the church.

before giving an opinion as to the charge, claimed that a post-mortem examination should be made of the body of the Hussar, which was lying, already stiff, behind the statue of Justus Lipsius.

Meanwhile, a soldier threw into M. David-Fischbach's house some incendiary substance, which immediately set fire to the dwelling. The latter contained pictures worth several hundred thousand francs, numerous objects of art, and precious manuscripts. In a few moments all these treasures were destroyed. The old coachman, Joseph Vandermosten, who had gone back into the house to save his employers, met his death there. His charred body was found by Father Claes on the 7th of September among the ruins of the house.

During the march of the four hostages to the station German soldiers came up continually and accused the occupants of the neighbouring houses of firing on them. Inquiries were made immediately by order of Major von Manteuffel, and in each case the allegation was proved to be false.

The party then continued on its way to the Town Hall. Having reached the statue of Justus Lipsius, the corpse of M. David-Fischbach—an old man of 82—was found, together with that of his son; they had been assassinated in the meanwhile.

The fire was spreading in all directions; groups of the townspeople, torn from their dwellings, were being dragged away by the soldiers.

Major von Manteuffel returned to the Town Hall and authorised the President of the Red Cross to go back to his home. Dr. Berghausen, at the Major's command, conducted him back to his residence, and informed the Dominican Fathers that Father Parijs had been detained at the Town Hall, but would be brought back to the monastery next day. After the expulsion of the inhabitants on August 27th, 1914, the Dominican monastery and the house of the President of the Red Cross were guarded. On his return to Louvain, at the beginning of the month of September, Baron Orban de Xivry handed to Dr. Berghausen a report attesting the facts that concerned him personally. This report has been published by German newspapers, with a commentary which perverts its significance.

Two of the hostages, Monseigneur Coenraets and Father Parijs, have protested against the statements imputed to them (see p. 69 above, and p. 280 below). Their two companions, who remained at Louvain, were not able to be heard by the Belgian Committee of Inquiry, but it appears from information given in October, 1914, by reliable persons, that Baron Orban de Xivry and Alderman Schmit, who witnessed the beginning of the sack of Louvain, never saw any *francs-tireurs*, nor did they hear any firing beyond that of the German machine-guns and German rifles.

Wednesday, August 26th.—During Wednesday morning German soldiers gave the inhabitants of certain streets the order to present themselves at the Place de la Station, where ten bodies of assassinated civilians were already lying.

The men were first of all brutally separated from their wives and children and stripped of all they possessed. A certain number of them were led off by the German soldiers, who subjected them to insults and violence. Obligated to walk about all day on the roads around Louvain, they were shut up for the night in the church of Campenhout. They were released in the afternoon of the following day at the gates of Malines.*

Many others were crowded into trains and sent in the direction of Germany.

The women and children remained without food on the Place de la Station for the whole day of August 26th. They witnessed the execution of several of their fellow-citizens, who had been seized at random from the groups of inhabitants brought up by the soldiers, and shot, for the most part, at the end of the Square, on the pavement bordering the property of M. Hamaide.†

At 2 o'clock in the afternoon the Civic Guards of Louvain were convoked by the German authorities. They appeared, to the number of 90, in the Saint-Martin barracks. From there they were taken to the Town Hall, where they were informed

* See Documents 1, 7, 8 and 26 for the account of their melancholy wanderings (Part III of this Chapter).

† See Document 9. A professor of Louvain University who happened to be in the Square gives even more terrible details: At the station prisoners were lined up facing the wall. Every now and then one of them was led away. Soon after a report was heard. It was strictly forbidden to turn round. However, one lady who was standing beside the professor did succeed in glancing behind her. She declares that she saw them forcing a civilian to lie flat on the ground, on his stomach, and that a soldier fired a bullet through the back of his neck.

It is well to compare this declaration with the account of the exhumation of the victims of the Louvain massacres (Document 30).

that they were prisoners. They were taken to the station and transported to Germany, to the Münster camp, where they remained interned for several weeks.*

In the course of the afternoon Monseigneur Coenraets and Father Parijs, guarded by 30 soldiers, were conducted to various quarters of the town to read new proclamations.

The women and children who had been detained in the Place de la Station were released in the night of August 26th–27th.

Thursday, August 27th.—On Thursday, August 27th, at 8 o'clock, an order was given to all the inhabitants to leave Louvain, as the town was to be bombarded.

Old men, women, children, invalids, monks and nuns were driven along the roads like a flock of sheep. What the exodus of the inhabitants was like and what atrocities were committed can scarcely be imagined: they were hounded along in various directions by brutal soldiers, forced to kneel and hold up their hands whenever German officers or men went by, left without food and without shelter for the night.

Nearly 10,000 inhabitants were driven as far as Tirlemont, a town about 18 kilometres from Louvain. It is impossible to describe what their sufferings must have been. Many of them were driven on again next day from Tirlemont to Saint-Trond and Hasselt.

It will suffice to quote one example only, of a group of 13 clergy, among whom were the priest of Saint-Joseph, M. Noël, Professor at the University, and the Father Superior of the missionaries of Scheut. These men were stopped on their way within the limits of the commune of Lovenjoul. They were insulted in every way, searched, stripped of their money and valuables, struck and ill-treated.†

Many of the inhabitants retired to the adjoining commune of Héverlé and the neighbouring villages; others, among whom were numerous priests and monks, left the town by the Chaussée de Tervueren,‡ and pursued their journey as far as Brussels. Some of the priests and monks were threatened and ill-treated. Father Schill, a Jesuit, gave an account, on August 27th, 1914, of the persecutions that certain of them had to endure and of the murder of Père Dupierreux at Tervueren.§

A considerable body of citizens was taken prisoner in the afternoon of August 26th, and hustled through the Rue de Bruxelles, as far as Hérent. There these unfortunate people became the sport of the officers and men, who submitted them to all sorts of humiliations and obliged them to drag heavy carts about for three hours. After that they were marched along the country roads, and had to pass the night in a field, unprotected from the pouring rain. The following day the party continued its journey through the villages of Bueken, Thildonck and Wespelaer. The prisoners passed the night in the church of Campenhout, and on the next day were brought back to Louvain; here men, women and children, several thousand in number, of all ages and classes, were conducted to the riding school of the town, under an escort formed of a detachment of the 162nd Regiment of German Infantry. The wretched people passed the whole night there. The space was so limited, in proportion to the number of occupants, that they were obliged to remain standing, and such were the miseries they endured that in the course of this terrible night some of the women went mad and children of tender age died in their mother's arms. During the day of the 29th they were led through the burning streets of Louvain and released in the neighbourhood of Malines, whence they found their way to the Belgian lines.||

Others, expelled from Louvain on August 27th, went off in the direction of the village of Rotselaer. On their arrival in this district they were stopped, stripped of their belongings and led back to Louvain with the inhabitants of the village. They were shut up in the station at Louvain and next day were crowded into cattle-trucks. They arrived at Cologne after a frightful journey, and as they left the train were insulted and hustled by the populace. On the following day, after passing the night in some military huts, where they received for the first time a little bread and some dirty water, they were led back to the station and crowded into third class

* See Documents 10 and 23. (Part III of this chapter).

† See Documents 11 and 12. (Part III of this chapter).

‡ See Document 14 (*ibid.*).

§ See Document 21 (*ibid.*).

|| See Document 22 (*ibid.*).

carriages. They arrived at Brussels on Monday morning, August 31st, in a state of complete exhaustion. The communal administration ordered them to be served with provisions. A few hours later they were driven in the direction of the Belgian lines, and after a march of several hours were released at the German outposts before Malines.*

Finally several hundreds of the inhabitants of Louvain were deported to Germany. They remained there many months, undergoing the most inhuman treatment.†

The motive for the expulsion of the inhabitants seems to have been to facilitate pillage. The soldiers were in such a hurry to steal that several witnesses declare they saw the pillage of their dwellings begin at the very moment at which they were forced to leave them.

Friday, August 28th.—The burning and pillaging of the almost deserted town continued.‡ The members of the Red Cross at Saint-Thomas' Institute, under the direction of Monseigneur Deploige, had remained at Louvain with their wounded. On Thursday, Alderman Schmit and M. Marguery, lawyer and secretary to the communal administration, had taken refuge with them at the Institute.

In the afternoon the inhabitants of Aerschot, who had been imprisoned in the church of that town, were led to Louvain and marched through the smoking ruins. They were assailed by bullets fired by German soldiers.§

Saturday, August 29th.—The Secretary of the United States Legation at Brussels, Mr. Gibson, came, with some other members of the diplomatic service, to Louvain by motor. In order to convince them that the civil population had fired on the troops, the German authorities had organized an odious spectacle. At different points of the town, notably at the Rue de Malines and Rue de la Station, German soldiers disguised as civilians were firing.

Sunday, August 30th.—By agreement with Alderman Schmit, who was obliged to leave Louvain, M. Nérinx, a Professor at the University and the director of St. Thomas' Hospital, entered into negotiations with Major von Manteuffel, the Commandant, to save what was left of Louvain and to constitute a provisional communal administration. He made sure of the support of the directors, managers, and doctors of Saint-Thomas' Hospital, who had not left the Institute. He formed, with their help, a committee of leading men, composed of M. Nérinx, provisional Burgomaster; Dr. Boine, the Capuchin Father Valère Claes, Dr. Paul Debaisieux, Professor at the University, Monsigneur Deploige, Professor at the University and President of Saint-Thomas' Institute, Dr. de Coninck, Charles de la Vallée-Poussin, Professor at the University, Pierre Helleputte, engineer, Canon Thiéry, Professor at the University, Dr. Tits and Léon Verhelst, Professor at the University. MM. Eugène Marguery, barrister, sometime communal secretary, and Vital Vingerroedt, architect and engineer, were associated with them. By agreement with Major von Manteuffel, a notice, signed by the committee of leading men, was placarded in the communes around Louvain, where the inhabitants had found shelter. This notice announced to the inhabitants that the German authorities had promised to put a stop to the burning and pillaging; it invited them to return to Louvain.

* See Documents 15, 16, 17. (Part III of this chapter).

† See Document 23. (Part III of this chapter).

‡ The diaries found on German prisoners contain irrefutable evidence.

§ One of the prisoners, G. Klein, belonging to the 1st Company of the Landsturm, writes under the date of August 29th, 1914 (see facsimile on pp. 178–180 of Vol. II. of the Reports of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry).

"From Roosbeek onwards we began to get an idea of the war; houses burnt down, walls riddled by bullets, clock-dial on a tower blown away by a shell, etc. A few scattered crosses marked the graves of the victims. We arrived at Louvain, which literally swarmed with military. Men of the battalion of the Halle Landsturm were arriving, dragging all kinds of things with them, mainly bottles of wine, and many of them were drunk. On our way through the town with ten cyclists to find quarters, a scene of devastation was revealed which it is impossible to exaggerate. Houses were burning and collapsing along every street; a few isolated buildings were left standing. We pursued our course over bits of shattered glass, burning wood and masses of rubbish. The tramway and telephone wires were lying in the streets.

"The barracks were still standing and were full of soldiers. On returning to the station no one knew what was going to take place. It had been understood that the soldiers should go through the streets in small groups, but presently the battalion turned into the town, in close formation, and at once broke into the nearest houses, to loot the wine and other things as well—I beg their pardon, to requisition merely. Like a pack of hounds let loose, they ran hither and thither as they chose, their officers setting them a good example. A night in barracks, with a crowd of drunken men was the conclusion of this day, which filled me with a disgust impossible to express."

§ See pp. 108, 119–121.

In spite of the promise of the German authorities, the burning and pillaging continued until September 2nd.

The pillage, which was begun on Thursday, August 27th, lasted a week. The soldiers, in bands of six or eight, broke in the doors or smashed the windows, went into the cellars, made themselves drunk with the wine, destroyed the furniture, emptied the safes, stole money, pictures, works of art, silver, linen, clothing, wine and provisions.

A large part of the booty was packed on military wagons and afterwards transported by train to Germany.

One thousand one hundred and twenty houses, mostly situated in the rich and business quarters, were burnt in the town of Louvain alone.*

On the doors of a certain number of houses which were spared a little notice was placarded; it read as follows:—

Dieses Haus ist zu schützen. Es ist streng verboten, ohne Genehmigung der Kommandantur, Häuser zu betreten oder in Brand zu setzen.

Die Etappen-Kommandantur.†

About 100 persons in Louvain were killed.‡

Pillage, arson, rape,§ and murder took place as well within the limits of the adjoining communes and of those in the neighbourhood of Louvain:—

At *Kessel-Loo* 461 houses were burnt, 325 were pillaged, and 59 persons massacred.

At *Hérent* 312 houses were burnt, 200 pillaged, and 22 persons killed.

At *Héverlé* 95 houses were burnt, 356 pillaged, and 6 persons killed.

At *Corbeek-Loo* 129 houses were burnt and 20 persons killed. The *château* of Baron de Dieudonné de Corbeek-over-Loo, where King Albert had taken up his residence at the beginning of the campaign, also that of the Chevalier de Schoutheete de Tervarent, were systematically emptied of the objects of art and valuable furniture they contained; then they were destroyed by fire. The same thing took place in the case of the Chevalier de Maurissen's *château* at Pellenberg.

At *Wilsele* 36 houses were burnt, 200 were pillaged, and 7 persons were killed.

At *Winxele* 57 houses were burnt, 150 pillaged, and 5 persons killed.

At *Rotselaer* 67 houses were burnt, several hundreds were pillaged, and 38 persons killed.

At *Linden* 103 houses were burnt, 90 were pillaged, and 6 persons killed.

At *Thildonck* 31 houses were burnt, 15 pillaged, and 10 persons killed.

At *Campeghout* 85 houses were burnt, 29 pillaged, and 14 persons killed.

At *Velthem-Beysssem* 44 houses were burnt, 100 pillaged, and 14 persons killed.

At *Bueken* 50 houses were burnt, 30 pillaged, and 8 persons killed.

At *Wespelaer* 47 houses were burnt, several hundreds were pillaged, and 21 persons killed.

What is the explanation of this destruction and these massacres?

The witnesses, who, moreover, were very numerous, heard by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry itself, by its English delegates, or by the English Commission, presided over by Lord Bryce, declared that the whole of the civil population abstained from any act of hostility whatsoever.

Many of them think that the German authorities, either in good faith or in their anxiety not to recognise the mistake made by their soldiers, held the town of Louvain responsible for the shots exchanged between the German soldiers. Others think that the German Commandant used the pretext of a pretended attack by the civil population to carry out in cold blood, according to a preconceived plan, and with the object of terrorising the people, the destruction of the town of Louvain.

* Besides this, 997 houses were burnt in the suburban communes of Kessel-Loo, Hérent, Héverlé and Corbeek-Loo, making a total of 2,117 houses.

† "This house is to be protected. It is strictly forbidden to enter a house or set it on fire without the consent of the Kommandantur."

‡ See Document 31, Part III. of this chapter, for a list of names of 210 victims from Louvain, Kessel-Loo, Hérent, Héverlé and Corbeek-Loo, who were assassinated within the limits of these communes and outside them.

Nine corpses could not be identified and seven persons had disappeared.

The list of the 210 victims comprises 186 males and 24 females. Three of these persons were less than 5 years old; five were between 10 and 15 years old; six were between 16 and 17; 126 between 18 and 49; 40 between 50 and 59; 18 between 60 and 69; seven between 70 and 79; four of 80 and over; 1, age unknown.

§ See especially on the subject of rapes at Corbeek-Loo and Kessel-Loo, Part III. of this chapter, Document 18.

The German authorities refused to hold a bilateral inquiry. Some time after the sack of Louvain, Monseigneur Ladeuze, Rector of the University, summoned the University professors to Brussels, to give their opinion on a suggestion that had been made to him, that *three* professors should be sent to *Berlin* to make a deposition on the subject of these events. The reply was made that the University could not accept this proposal, but proposed the formation of an *international* committee of inquiry, having its seat at Louvain, which should hear *all* the witnesses without distinction. The German authorities did not take up this proposal. Baron von der Goltz instituted, in September, 1914, a judicial inquiry as to : " what German soldiers, if any, could be held punishably responsible for the burning of the town of Louvain." Some of the German military were examined. We have their declarations in the German "White Book." Numerous inhabitants of Louvain were called to give evidence. The "White Book" reproduces none of their depositions, with the exception of one, that of Professor Lemaire. (See App. D 31 and p. 68 of this volume.) The German inquiry offered no guarantee of impartiality. To quote one fact only, it suffices to point out that the examiner refused to record in Monsignor Ladeuze's deposition that the latter knew of women violated in a suburb (on the pretext that the inquiry was concerned with Louvain only), and that he had seen German soldiers firing from the Institute of Arenberg (on the pretext that this was unimportant and that the deposition was finished).

Dr. Tits, one of the four or five Belgian doctors who remained at Louvain throughout the course of events there, was also interrogated by the Court of Inquiry. After replying to the various questions put to him, he declared that, although he had seen no soldiers who had been the victims of atrocities, he had, on the other hand, tended many women and children wounded by bullets. The Court declined to record this declaration, and the only explanation vouchsafed to Dr. Tits was : "*Das hat keinen Zweck*" (This can serve no purpose).

The sack of Louvain has aroused universal indignation as an act of barbarity and vandalism. Hence the German Government, after having officially announced the destruction of the town, endeavoured to minimise the importance of the disaster and to seek an excuse for it.

An official note, sent to the press on August 31st, 1914, tried to represent the destruction of the town less as a voluntary act than as a consequence of the necessary repression of a rising among the population : " A plan arranged in advance with the troops at Antwerp must have been carefully prepared. Two priests, taken in the very act of distributing cartridges, were shot in the Place de la Gare. The fighting in the streets lasted till the afternoon of August 26th, when reinforcements succeeded in stamping out the revolt. The city and the northern suburb caught fire in several places, and have probably been burnt."

The version given by the German "White Book" is even more categorical:—"In face of the brutal attacks of which they were the object, the German troops were obliged to have recourse to active reprisals. In accordance with what had been threatened, the inhabitants who had taken part in the attack were shot, and the houses from which they had fired were burnt down. It was impossible to prevent the fire from spreading to other houses and destroying some of the streets ; it was in this way that the cathedral caught fire. The work of extinguishing the conflagration, which was undertaken in a spirit of self-sacrifice by our troops, under the direction of their officers, prevented the flames from spreading still further" (p. 235).

The "White Book" distorts the facts of history. The thesis it endeavours to prove is entirely improbable. Who could be persuaded that an unarmed population, terrorised, moreover, by the events of Aerschot and Tongres, could have organised a rising, when at the same time the town had been occupied for seven days by numerous troops, when the soldiers were billeted on the inhabitants, and searches were made continuously ? Who could be made to believe that, unknown to the suspicious German authorities, a foreign element could have insinuated itself into the town and mingled with the population ? Could anyone suppose that this population was able—for 24 hours, according to the German official communiqué of August 31st, and actually for three days according to the "White Book"—to oppose the troops constituting the garrison of Louvain, and the German corps which re-entered Louvain in the evening, at the close of the conflict which took place in the afternoon with the Belgian troops in the immediate vicinity of the town ?

PART II.

CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE REPORT OF THE GERMAN MILITARY BUREAU
OF INQUIRY AND ITS APPENDICES.

In the case of Louvain, as of Dinant, the depositions recorded in the "White Book" are numerous; for one town, as for the other, they emanate solely (except for the deposition of Dr. Lemaire, one of the only two Belgian witnesses whose statement is reproduced in the "White Book,"* and that of M. Sittart, member of the Reichstag), from German officers and men who arranged and carried out the burning and massacres; in the one case as in the other, the presumption arising from these reports seems to be that the population was guilty of the acts of *francs-tireurs*.

But, just as in the case of Dinant, this is merely a passing impression, which grows fainter and fainter in proportion as the depositions are weighed and compared one with another.† It is not even necessary to recall the reports of the English and Belgian Commissions of Inquiry to be convinced of the complete improbability of the legend which the compilers of the "White Book" endeavour to establish as an explanation of the drama of Louvain.

* * *

The German explanation of the events of Louvain is morally and materially impossible.—In the "White Book" the explanation of events consists in maintaining that the inhabitants of the town were in secret touch with Antwerp; that they imagined that the Belgian army, with the help of English troops, would succeed in piercing the German lines, and that they awaited the moment when the national army should make a sortie from Antwerp, to fall treacherously upon the German troops (p. 234). The "rising" is supposed to have been prepared long beforehand (p. 236).

This explanation of the events of August 25th, 1914, and the days following, is contradicted by the evidence collected in the German inquiries themselves, which, moreover, give proof that there are both moral and material impossibilities in the way of admitting the German theory of an organised "rising" of the population of Louvain.

Moral impossibilities. A.—It is certain that if the civil population of Louvain, counting on a victory of the national troops over the invaders, had wished to harass the latter by firing on them from the roofs of the houses, the cellars, or the windows, it would have abandoned this intention from the moment it realised that the Belgians were not succeeding in entering Louvain, but that, on the contrary, the town was given over to fire and pillage by the German troops. In other words, if we admit (*quod non*) that civilians, actuated by the motives mentioned above, did fire on the evening of August 25th and during the night of the 25th–26th, this explanation must be rejected in the case of the 26th and 27th. However, according to the German inquiry, the revolt lasted several days.

Georg Berghausen, head doctor of the second battalion of Light Infantry of the Neuss Landsturm (App. D 9), declares that on the morning of August 26th officers and men were fired at; Robert Dreher, private in the 11th Company of the 48th Infantry Regiment, claims to have been fired at from a garden on the afternoon of the 27th (App. D 19); Willy Kröber, corporal in the 8th Regiment of the Grenadiers of the Guard, asserts that on August 27th, at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, he and six companions were fired at with revolvers from the roofs of various houses in the Place du Marché (App. D 20); finally, Stanislas Dadaczynski, private in the 6th Company of the 27th Regiment of Infantry Reserves, maintains that the fusillade lasted, with certain interruptions, until August 27th (App. D 29); Franz Bongartz tells the same story (App. D 24). General von Boehn goes further than all of them, and declares that until August 28th prolonged fusillades (*dauernde Beschiessungen*) were directed against the troops and columns (App. D 1).

* Dr. Lemaire saw no civilians fire; he states that nearly all the important houses in the Rue Léopold were burnt. His own house was also burnt while he was taking refuge with his family in the country owing to the announcement, made on August 27th, that the town would be bombarded and destroyed (App. D 31). The other Belgian witness whose deposition is reported in the "White Book" is M. Jules Brontine (App. 51, see p. 68 of the present volume).

† One would expect that General von Boehn's deposition would be specially characterised by its gravity and accuracy; this, however, is not the case. A perusal of the evidence of the Commander of the 9th Army Corps of Reserves in itself suffices to give an idea of the value of the German inquiry; this remark applies especially to the conclusion of the deposition, presented as *Gutachten* (explanatory comment by an expert), and inserted on page 241, last paragraph, and page 242 of the "White Book."

Although their authors do not recognise the fact, all these depositions preclude the possibility of a "rising of the populace" having taken place, with the object of coming to the help of the Belgian troops at the moment when the latter were approaching Louvain.

B.—General von Boehn (App. D 1) declares that on his arrival at the Town Hall of Louvain, in the evening of August 25th, he caused an announcement to be made by the hostages whom he sent throughout the town that it would be set on fire by the artillery, and that the hostages would be shot if the firing from the houses continued.

Major von Manteuffel (App. D 3) confirms this statement, and adds that among the penalties with which the town was threatened was a fine of 20 million francs.

This warning was published in the streets for the benefit of the inhabitants by the hostages, accompanied by a group of soldiers, and in particular by Monseigneur Coenraets, Vice-Rector of the University of Louvain (App. D 30). Scarcely had the latter made his mission known to the population when, on the evidence of Sittart, deputy to the Reichstag, shots were fired on the troops who accompanied him, regardless of the fate awaiting the hostages. Civilians are even supposed to have fired, on the following day, on four Sisters of Charity occupied in transporting a wounded man (App. D 27).

How improbable these charges are ! Is it likely that the Belgians, while risking their lives for love of their country, and thus giving proof of a manifest, though ill-conceived, regard for the general interest, would, after having assured themselves of the absolute futility of their efforts, have exposed the most respected of their fellow-citizens to slaughter and their city to the flames in sheer wantonness and without benefiting a soul ? This view is all the more absurd in that the German authorities maintain that the conspiracy had been organised and was directed by the Civic Guard ; it was not a question, therefore, of isolated marksmen firing on their own account. Moreover, it cannot be said that the *francs-tireurs* did not take the threats seriously ; the burning of the town of Aerschot, quite close by, which had taken place on August 19th, was fresh in the minds of all.

It is known that Monseigneur Coenraets declared in the most formal manner that the assertion of the German deputy was false, that he did not know who had fired the few rifle shots he had heard in the distance, and that these shots were not aimed at the soldiers of his escort (see p. 69 of this volume).

Material impossibilities. A.—The arms had been handed over by the civil population to the communal administration. The arms of the Civic Guard, disbanded on August 19th at 7 o'clock in the morning, had been sent to Antwerp immediately afterwards.

The general fact of the deposition of arms by the inhabitants is not contested in the "White Book" ; the report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry merely states that arms, in fairly large quantities, were still found after the 19th of August, the date of the entry, at about 2 p.m., of the first German detachments into Louvain (p. 236).

General von Boehn declares that 300 rifles were found in a church in Louvain. He does not disclose the name of this church, but mentions the discovery of the 300 rifles among the five facts which he enumerates as proving, in his mind, in an indubitable manner (*zweifelsfrei*) that the "popular rising" of Louvain had been methodically organised (p. 242). It is entirely contrary to all truth that arms were placed in any church in Louvain. It is astonishing that a general in command of an army corps should pledge his oath to a declaration as vague as this and based on unauthenticated information.

B.—The utter impossibility of the existence of the "rising," as the "White Book" pictures it, results from the lack of arms ; its entire improbability follows from the circumstances in which certain witnesses claim to have observed the so-called firing directed against the troops.

Thus, Dr. Georg Berghausen, chief doctor to the 2nd Battalion of the Light Infantry of the Landsturm of Neuss, declares he saw civilians in the second storey of the house in the Rue de la Station, numbered 120, directing a murderous fire on two officers and some soldiers who were passing rapidly down the street. This took place towards midnight ; it was dark in the town (p. 245, line 7), and one asks how Dr. Berghausen could have observed this. However, the witness actually asserts that the German officers and soldiers, as well as himself, were on the pavement on the same side as number 120 and *in front of it* at the moment when the shots were fired at them. It must have been very difficult, while walking rapidly past

the houses, thus to recognise places in the total darkness and to observe without stopping the second storey windows of a tall house such as all the houses are in the Rue de la Station (App. D 9).

Dr. Berghausen further states that, having driven the venerable David Fischbach and his son and old servant out of their house an instant before the incident above-mentioned, he lost sight of them in the darkness, amidst a tumult that had arisen. But this darkness, which caused him to lose sight of these three persons who had been at his side, did not prevent him from noticing that the two officers and the soldiers, who were walking rapidly along the Rue de la Station, and who had only been close to him during a part of the way from the Town Hall to the station, had fired neither a rifle nor a revolver ! Yet this is what Dr. Berghausen does not hesitate to declare categorically (*Ich kann es bestimmt aussagen*).

How did he dare to make such a definite pronouncement ? According to his own evidence, indeed, as well as the statements of other witnesses, darkness reigned in Louvain, if not from the actual beginning of the evening of August 25th, at least from 10 o'clock, and probably even earlier (App. D 2, p. 245 ; D 37, p. 300 ; D 18, p. 272 ; D 49, p. 328). The collective report of the Military Bureau of Berlin itself states the fact (p. 235, lines 6 and 7).

Otto Rudolph, paymaster of the 11th Company of Reserve Railway Service, declares, for his part, that at midnight he saw a window open on the second storey of the Marie-Thérèse Hotel, in the Place de la Station, and that he saw a person of the *masculine sex* shoot several times from this window in the direction of the Square (App. D 45).

The darkness did not even prevent Major von Klewitz from observing from the station buildings, at 11 o'clock on the same evening, that tiles were being removed on the roof of the Marie-Thérèse Hotel (App. D 2) !

C.—The German accusations relative to the alleged “rising” of the population concern the 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th of August (p. 236 and App. D 1). The reprisals ought, therefore, to have stopped at the latest on August 29th. What then could have justified the burning and looting of three houses in the Rue Marie-Thérèse on Wednesday, September 2nd, when four days had elapsed since the conclusion of the alleged rebellion ?

* * *

The Clergy.—We know that, according to the “White Book,” the clergy are supposed to have taken part in the war of the Belgian populace (p. 2) ; the “White Book” repeatedly accuses the clergy of actually having incited their flocks and of having preached a kind of holy war against the Germans.

In his pastoral letter of Christmas, 1914, Cardinal Mercier, Primate of Belgium, affirms on his honour, and is prepared to swear to it on oath, that, having interrogated the clergy and the people on every possible occasion, he did not discover a single ecclesiastic, either secular or regular, who incited the civil population to take up arms against the enemy. “On the contrary,” he says, “all obeyed faithfully the episcopal instructions given them during the first days of August, which commanded them to use their moral influence to persuade our populace to remain calm and to respect the military regulations.*”

This solemn declaration ought surely to have put an end to the legend. However, it did not do so. The accusation occurs again in a general manner in the report of the German Military Bureau concerning Louvain. It is there stated that a certain number of clergy allowed themselves to be drawn into misusing their influence with the civil population, and inducing them to give shelter to the *francs-tireurs* ; it is an established fact, it affirms, that a certain number of them took a direct share in the conflict.

In support of these assertions the “White Book” brings forward the depositions made in App. D 1, 19, 34, 37, 38, 41, 42, 45 and 48 (p. 236).

However, these depositions are almost entirely confined to the mention of gossip or incidents observed by third parties ; direct and pertinent proofs furnished by witnesses who personally noted a definite and indisputable fact are non-existent. One significant feature is the manner in which witnesses constitute themselves the echo of conversations they had with third persons. They very rarely name these, but generally record their words in a vague way which allows people of imagination

* See also the collective letter of the Belgian Episcopate to the Austro-German Episcopate, on November 24th, 1915, p. 349.

to complete their line of thought and gives free rein to suspicion. The examination of the various depositions calling the clergy into question will show that this criticism is in no way exaggerated.

A.—Richard Hermansen, Captain of the reserve battalion of the 7th Infantry Regiment, and public prosecutor at Düsseldorf, had a conversation with an ecclesiastic at Lombeek-Sainte-Catherine. The latter is supposed to have told him that he had advised his parishioners from the pulpit to go to Antwerp if they wished to take part in the struggle, and to take a rifle and enlist in the army; that the enemy was likewise only doing his duty. The ecclesiastic is supposed to have made no protest when the officer replied that many troubles would have been spared the Belgians and the Germans if the priests had all used the same arguments to their flocks (App. D 42).

The speech ascribed to this ecclesiastic can but do him honour; moreover, he only acted in the same way as all his colleagues among the Belgian clergy. But the German officer insinuates that the priest condemned the attitude of certain of his colleagues. Why does not the "White Book" quote the name of this priest? Why was the latter not examined? It would have been very useful to make him give an explanation himself of the meaning of his words and to declare his opinion of the attitude of his colleagues, for every supposition becomes possible as soon as one begins to interpret motives.

Captain von Vethacke also made the acquaintance of this ecclesiastic and likewise carried away from the interview the impression that he did not approve of the attitude of his colleagues (App. D 43).

Can it be said that these depositions constitute a proof of the culpability of the Belgian clergy, or at least of the culpability of a large number of them? No one would venture to maintain it.

B.—Otto Rudolph, paymaster of the 11th Company of Reserve Railway Service, says in the course of his deposition that he saw at Linden, near Louvain, at about 7 o'clock in the evening on August 25th, three ecclesiastics at the western end of the village, walking separately along the streets and going about speaking to the people (App. D 45). Were these ecclesiastics armed? Were they searched? Does anyone know what they were saying to their parishioners? Were they inciting them to arm or exhorting them to be calm, in the manner of the priest of Lombeek-Sainte-Catherine, who has just been mentioned? The officer refrains from saying anything definite on this subject. If he incriminates the three priests and makes their attitude appear highly suspicious, it is because some people from Kessel-Lo had told him they had heard from the clergy that the English had succeeded in piercing the German lines near Louvain. Rudolph then remembers having seen three ecclesiastics at the exit of the village of Linden; that is enough to render these priests suspect in his eyes.

Further on in his deposition the officer declares that towards midnight several civilians were shot in front of the station, and among them were six or seven priests. Thus no positive ground for accusation is established. But suspicion is allowed to rest on the affair, and it is left to the imagination of the reader to draw the conclusion that the priests who were shot were guilty.

C.—Carl Damman, volunteer automobilist to the Staff of the 9th Reserve Army Corps, was present at the execution of *francs-tireurs* in the Place de la Station; he saw some fifty shot, and, as far as he can remember, there were two priests among them (App. D 41).

Here, again, it is not stated what was the crime of these two priests, whether they were taken armed, or whether they were seen firing on the German troops. The only actual fact ascertained is that they were shot.

D.—Richard Grüner, volunteer automobilist to the Staff of the 9th Reserve Army Corps, saw at Louvain a man dressed in priest's clothes, with a characteristically ecclesiastical physiognomy (*mit unverkennbar geistlicher Physiognomie*) and a broad-brimmed hat trimmed with two Franciscan cords. This ecclesiastic is supposed to have pointed out to the German troops a road which led them into a blind alley, where they were fired on (App. D 38).

Again the matter is extremely vague. Whither did they ask the ecclesiastic to direct them? Did the latter understand exactly what was asked of him and did the soldiers entirely grasp what was told them? Who was this ecclesiastic? Why does not the "White Book" contain a declaration by the officers who conducted the examination that took place on the night of August 25th–26th, and as a consequence of which 80 to 100 civilians, among them 10 to 15 priests, according

to Grüner, were shot ? To show the value of this man's declaration it is sufficient to point out that the total number of priests killed at Louvain by the Germans on the night of August 25th–26th, was happily not more than two, the Josephite brothers, Allard and Sebastien.

Grüner, who acted as interpreter, reports further that many of the civilians arrested told him they were innocent, adding that the priests alone were responsible for the events that had taken place. A Belgian decorated with the Red Eagle and carrying his certificate of investiture is supposed to have declared especially that the clergy held the people in the hollow of their hand. The name of this Belgian who was so strangely well informed on the state of mind of the population of his country, and particularly of the town of Louvain, is not given, any more than are those of two ladies, likewise arrested—one of them an American from Saint-Louis—who, Grüner states, gave similar accounts.

The same witness also asserts that, according to repeated reports from soldiers, the German troops were fired on vigorously from a monastery situated on the road from Louvain to Bueken. He adds that when, on August 26th, he went to Bueken by motor, he had to take special measures of precaution himself in order to pass the monastery. It is not, however, made clear in the text that shots were fired from the building *at that particular moment*; the impression conveyed is that it was the warnings given him by the soldiers which made Grüner think the measures of precaution necessary, and not at all the personal observations made by him at the time of approaching the dangerous area. If this be the truth, Grüner would not have been an eye-witness of the facts he mentions.

The monastery to which Grüner alludes is the Benedictine Abbey of Mont César. It is absolutely certain that, contrary to the assertion of the witness as well as to that of General von Boehn (p. 241), no shot was fired from this building; the latter was, moreover, respected by the German troops.

It seems that Grüner, who is of the Protestant religion, and is a native of Hamburg, an exclusively Protestant town, had his mind even more filled than other German soldiers with anti-Catholic prejudices before arriving in Belgium.

E.—The depositions of Sergeant-Major Ludwig Hilmer, of the 3rd Company of the 215th Regiment of Infantry Reserves, and of Heinrich Westerkamp, fusilier of the Ambulance Corps of the Ersatz Battalion of the 75th Regiment of Infantry Reserves, contain accusations of an absolutely insignificant nature (App. D 37).

Hilmer declares that he *heard it said* by a patrol that they had arrested in a church some inhabitants in possession of arms and ammunition. His company marched on a convent, from which *it was said* firing had been seen. In the convent, however, there was discovered neither a living soul nor arms nor ammunition. It is true that the witness adds immediately afterwards that a transport column had been fired at on the road passing below this convent, in consequence of which several houses were burnt. As Hilmer makes no mention, with regard to these shots and this burning, of the convent itself, the entire baselessness of the suspicion cast on its supposed occupants is demonstrated.

This evidence, therefore, is reduced to a vague rumour and an accusation whose lack of foundation is proved by the witness's own deposition.

The second witness, Westerkamp, is not more definite. He saw two priests brought before an officer, one of whom declared himself to be German and said that he had not fired. Westerkamp, however, heard it said later (he does not state by whom) that a Browning revolver was found on this same priest. Would it not have been far more convincing to have examined the officer than to record the statements of the soldier Westerkamp, who, in formulating the accusation, only repeats the sayings of third parties ? A Belgian, moreover, is supposed to have spoken to Westerkamp in German, and to have declared to him that all the misfortunes of Louvain would have been averted if the priests had not from the pulpit declared those people blessed (*selig gepriesen*) who fired on the Germans. Why was this Belgian not examined ? Did he express himself clearly in German and did Westerkamp understand him properly ? The improbability of the statement warrants a negative reply.

F.—Walter Josephson, Captain of the 2nd Battalion of the 53rd Infantry Regiment of Landwehr, was ordered to conduct about a thousand civil prisoners from Rotselaer to Louvain (App. D 34). He noticed during the journey that a Belgian priest was betraying unusual excitement and that at every halt he went from one to another of the prisoners, speaking to them with animation; in consequence of which the captain kept a special watch on him. On arrival at Louvain he handed

over the detachment of prisoners to another German troop; the next morning he learnt from Captain Ernst, of the 1st Company of the 53rd Infantry Regiment of Landwehr, that during the night the priest in question had fired on one of the sentries, without hitting him, and that, as a consequence of this act, he had been shot, probably by order of the Commandant.

On consideration of the circumstances as the witnesses themselves describe them, the conclusion must be that they cannot possibly state the exact truth.

Mention is made, indeed, over and over again in the "White Book" of the order to shoot on the spot men found in possession of arms and ammunition.* In view of this, how is it conceivable that the priest was not at once shot if he had carried a revolver? For it is impossible that he should have been able to conceal the weapon from the eyes of the soldiers at the moment when he was searched, especially as he had by his manner attracted the attention of the officer who was conducting the column of prisoners.

The witness, moreover, did not see the priest fire on the sentry, and confines himself to reporting the affair according to the accounts he heard after it was over. The only definite fact is that the body of the priest was seen next day in the Place de la Station by Captain Ernst, who likewise, to judge from the text, does not appear to have himself seen the attempt made on the soldier.

In reality, the priest to whom Josephson alludes was no other than Abbé Van Bladel, priest of Hérent, an old man of 72, who did his best to revive the courage of his parishioners. The priest of Hérent, whose corpse was exhumed at Louvain on January 14th, 1915 (see Part III. of this chapter, Document 30), died a martyr. On Friday, August 28th, 1914, he collapsed from exhaustion, after passing the whole night in the Place de la Station. Two soldiers seized him, one by the shoulders, the other by the feet, and swinging him like a bundle, threw him over the little balustrade which borders the Van de Weyer square. The poor priest raised himself quickly, and before falling beneath the bullets of his murderers he shouted to them with all the strength he had left: "*Bandieten! Lafaards! Brandstichters! Moordenaars!*" (Bandits! Cowards! Incendiaries! Murderers!)

G.—Robert Dreher, fusilier of the 11th Company of the 48th Infantry Regiment, saw a hundred civilians, among whom were five priests, conducted to the Place de la Station, where they were all shot (App. D 19).

Their crime? That they fired at Germans or were found in possession of arms.

The proof of this accusation? None is forthcoming, for the evidence of those who—presumably—found the weapons or saw the civilians fire is not in the "White Book."

H.—Brandt, Sub-Lieutenant of Reserve, relates that two ecclesiastics were executed for distributing ammunition to civilians. Brandt did not see it; he confines himself to reporting what was told him by an orderly officer of the General Command (*Generalkommando*), whose name he does not mention (App. D 48).

I.—Finally, General von Boehn himself lodges the general accusation (p. 242) against the clergy of leading and inciting the population. But he furnishes no more proofs than the other witnesses, and produces no direct evidence.

He affirms that at Bueken the fusillade on the troops began at the moment when the priest left the church; from the simultaneousness of these two incidents (which, moreover, he did not witness) he concludes that the exit of the priest from the church was a signal given to the *francs-tireurs*. The priest is supposed also to have declared that there were no armed men in the church, and yet five were found; these men, who were said to have fired from the roof of the church, were all shot. It will be observed that here again not only is the evidence of the person who actually saw the facts reported lacking, but his name, and that we have not even any indication of the corps to which he belonged. As for the assertion of General von Boehn that 300 rifles were found in a church in Louvain, it has been stated above to be inaccurate.

This is the sum total of the proofs collected by the "White Book" against the clergy of Louvain. Of all the charges formulated not one has been substantiated

* General von Boehn says that all the inhabitants found with arms were at once shot (App. D 1, p. 242 para. 7). Major von Klewitz confirms the fact that this was the General's order (App. D 2); Major von Manteuffel gave the same instructions (App. D 3), and Richard Grüner, the volunteer automobilist, says in his second deposition that these instructions were faithfully carried out (App. D 38). Sergeant Helmer likewise reports that every man on whom arms or ammunition were found was shot (App. D 37, p. 299). Captain von Vethacke also asserts this (App. D 43).

or established by the declarations of eye-witnesses of the facts alleged against the clergy.

These accusations are, for the most part, actually reduced to nothing by a German sociologist, the Abbé Dr. Karl Sonnenschein, of München-Gladbach, in two letters addressed, under his signature, to the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, and published in a supplement to Nos. 786 and 800, of September 5th and 10th, 1914, of this paper. The first of these letters gives the account of a visit paid on September 3rd by Dr. Sonnenschein to Monseigneur Coenraets,* Vice-Rector of the University, who had taken refuge at Heerlen (Dutch Limburg), and the second describes a journey made some days later to Louvain. From this correspondence it appears:—

1. That on the order of the archiepiscopal authorities, calmness and abstention from all acts of hostility were urgently recommended from the beginning of the war to the population in all the churches of Louvain, and that Mgr. Mercier's instructions were not only read therein, but carefully commented upon.

2. That the regular and secular clergy of Louvain in its entirety (*in seiner Gesamtheit*) did what was in its power to carry out actively its peace-mission; that if, by hypothesis, isolated individuals wearing a cassock (ecclesiastics or seminarists) had been anywhere involved (*verwickelt*) in the strife, this particular fact would not in any way affect the general proposition which has just been enunciated: that Mgr. Conraets knows of no ecclesiastic, and that in Louvain not a single one was mentioned to the Abbé Sonnenschein, as guilty of this conduct.

3. That in no church in Louvain were rifles found.

4. That shots were fired from no church or belfry.

The German Catholic review, *Der Fels*, on its part, expressing itself on the subject of the Belgian clergy in general, has concluded that no case of firing from the tops of belfries with the assistance of priests has been officially established and that not a single act of atrocity laid to the charge of Catholic priests has been proved. The review wonders how it is possible to reconcile this fact with the telegram despatched on September 4th, 1914, by the German Emperor to the President of the United States of America.†

One cannot refrain from asking a similar question, when comparing the declarations of Dr. Sonnenschein with the passage referred to on page 223, par. 8, in the chapter dealing with Louvain of the German Military Bureau, as well as with certain depositions appended to this chapter, in particular that of General von Boehn. ("White Book," p. 242.) The members of the Bureau of Inquiry and the Commander of the 9th Reserve Army Corps have yielded, like certain newspapers, to those general suspicions" (*Pauschalverdächtigungen*), which are based on superficial rumours and, as Sonnenschein's letter states, "fly in the face of realities" (*der Wirklichkeit der Dinge ins Gesicht schlagen*).‡

As to Major von Manteuffel, who, in his deposition (App. D 3) refrained from uttering a single word as to the attitude of the clergy, the *Tägliche Rundschau*, in No. 503, of October 19th, 1914, credits him with the following words: "I have no reason to believe that the clergy participated in the crime committed here, either as intellectual instigators or in any other manner."

* * *

The Civic Guard.§—The German Government especially incriminates, with regard to the "rising" of Louvain, the members of the Civic Guard. The Military Bureau of Inquiry at Berlin declares, in its report on the events which took place in this town, that "the official quarters of the chief of what is called the Civic Guard (*der Amtssitz des Chefs der sogenannten Garde civique*) was at Louvain, and that this chief had also spent some time in the town immediately before the rising." The report adds that the classic case of Louvain revealed to the whole of the civilised world the misdeeds of the Civic Guard—(no distinction being made, moreover, between the active and the non-active Guard) (p. 236). The proof of the accusation is said to be in App. D 1, 30, 45 and 48.

The foregoing statement shews the carelessness with which the German authorities put forward facts without any foundation, and their presumption in deciding

* In consequence of this visit Dr. Sonnenschein, as has been said above, attributed to Mgr. Coenraets statements relative to the attitude of the people of Louvain which the Vice-Rector of the University has formally denied (see p. 69).

† See page 55.

‡ *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, September 10th, 1914, No. 800.

§ See also General Statement, Chapter I, pp. 12, 13 of present volume.

questions about which they obviously know nothing. There is no single and supreme head of the Civic Guard in Belgium, as the German Military Bureau of Inquiry imagines; on the other hand, there exist in this country four head commanders of the Civic Guard. The head commander of the Civic Guards of the provinces of Brabant and Antwerp has his headquarters at Brussels; this officer has not been in Louvain once since the outbreak of the war.* There is all the more ground for astonishment at the theory maintained in the report of the Military Bureau, seeing that this report is dated April 10th, 1915, and was therefore drawn up at leisure.†

A.—The first witness called, General von Boehn (App. D 1), asserts that inhabitants of the town, whom he does not name and who were interrogated under conditions not described by the "White Book," declared that among the *francs-tireurs* were a party of people whom they did not know and had never seen at Louvain. General von Boehn concludes from this that they were people who had come from outside and attached themselves to the Civic Guard. The latter, a body of militia whose members wear uniform or not according to the occasion, must have formed the nucleus of the bands of *francs-tireurs*. He supposes the centre of the organisation to have been at Louvain, in which town it would work better than elsewhere, because here was the seat of the commander of the Civic Guard, and because this commander had stayed at Louvain shortly before, as is proved by the fact that his trunk was seized at the Hôtel Métropole.

It is permissible to express the opinion that such a manner of reasoning is entirely lacking in weight. Louvain, as has just been seen, was not the seat of the commander of the Civic Guard. The trunk that was seized at the Hôtel Métropole did not belong to an officer of the Civic Guard. It was the property of Lieutenant-Colonel Wielemans, an officer in the Belgian army, whose headquarters were at Louvain up to the time of the retreat towards the entrenched camp at Antwerp.

B.—The "White Book" then cites the evidence of Herr Sittart, deputy to the Reichstag, of Aix-la-Chapelle (App. D 30).

He heard at Louvain, on August 31st, 1914, a party of weeping women, among them the widow of a doctor, who acknowledged formally that the German troops had been fired at from the houses and cellars. The doctor's widow was of the opinion (*meinte*) that the marksmen belonged to the Civic Guard; she agreed, moreover, with the deputy when he declared that the Civic Guard deserve no more mercy than do the regular troops,‡ when instead of fighting in honest combat, they fire treacherously from ambushes, from the tops of houses, and from cellars.

The German deputy, therefore, made an inquiry at Louvain on recent events; he inquired into the personality of the witnesses or of certain among them, since he reveals the fact that one of the people he questioned was a doctor's widow. It is really incomprehensible that he does not give the name of this person. How much more weight his assertion would have had! It could have been verified, and it could have been ascertained whether what Herr Sittart reports really agrees with what the widow meant. One has all the more right to distrust the assertions of the deputy, since, in the second part of his deposition, when he implicates the Vice-Rector of the University of Louvain, Herr Sittart attributes to him words which Mgr. Coenraets formally denied as soon as they were brought to his knowledge.

C.—Kurt Brandt, Lieutenant of Reserve of the 9th Company of the 52nd Infantry Regiment, likewise adds his stone to the edifice that has been built up to incriminate the Civic Guard. He considers that it was the latter which prepared the rising of Louvain, considering the suddenness and the uniform nature of the firing (App. D 48). He is strengthened in this conviction by the fact that he found, on August 23rd, at Winghe-Saint-Georges, a commune on the outskirts of Louvain,

* See also General Statement, Chapter I, pp. 12, 13 of present volume.

† The French official translation of the German "White Book" expresses itself as follows on the subject of the part taken by the Civic Guard in organising the "rising of Louvain":—"The direction of this terrible ambushade must have proceeded from a superior administration, for everything points to its having been organised by regular authorities. Louvain was the headquarters of the commander of the Civic Guard. The chief of this Guard had further stayed in the town shortly before the rising, and had organised the insurrection, by sending to Louvain young men without badges and without discipline. In league with some soldiers dressed as civilians, these young men hid in the houses in order to shoot, at the right moment, at the German troops, supposed to be in retreat. The Belgian Government itself has never dared to say a word about this participation by a body of regular troops of the Belgian army. It was, in reality, an ambushade, arranged by *francs-tireurs*, who were welcomed with enthusiasm and hidden by the population. The misdeeds of the Civic Guard are revealed in the most striking manner before the whole world by the events of Louvain" (pp. 9 and 10).

‡ Are the ruses of war only fair in Herr Sittart's eyes when practised by German troops?

a Belgian Government notice ordering the mobilisation of the Civic Guard and specifying the insignia it was to wear. He was unable to find any such insignia at Winghe-Saint-Georges. Nor was he able to arrest the Civic Guards, a list of whom had been found at the communal administration of the village, because, according to the Burgomaster, almost the whole of the population had fled; but Brandt "supposes" that the male inhabitants had been concentrated at Louvain, where a gathering of these "troops" was to take place.

And it is upon such "suppositions" of an imaginative officer that the argument maintained by the "White Book" is partly based!

In reality the notice to which Brandt alludes is no other than a letter from the provincial governors, making known the contents of the ministerial circular of August 5th to the burgomasters of all communes of less than 10,000 inhabitants. This circular did not "mobilise" the Civic Guard; it called up the Reservists of the Civic Guard.* Using as foundation a misunderstood official document, Brandt constructs a theory in support of his prejudices.

D.—The last deposition relied upon is that of Otto Rudolph, paymaster of the 11th Company of Reserve Railway Service. Rudolph asserts that a bank employee said to him on August 26th at Louvain that the Belgian Civic Guards had fired on the German troops from several houses, notably from the one numbered 105 in Rue de la Station; that, on August 25th, towards 3 o'clock in the afternoon, some members of the Belgian Civic Guard had forced the inhabitants to receive them into their houses, under pain of death, and that the citizens of Louvain had thus been obliged against their will to allow German troops to be fired on from their houses (App. D 45).

Here, indeed, is a tale that no one could believe. Louvain was occupied from August 19th by German troops, who were billeted there in considerable numbers; patrols constantly paraded the town. The delivery of all arms to the authorities was commanded by the Belgian communal administration before the occupation of the town; the order was renewed by the German commander after the occupation. Whoever was found in possession of arms, therefore, was necessarily suspect and ran the risk of immediate arrest. In the midst of all this hostile military organisation the Civic Guards are supposed to have succeeded in insinuating themselves, in large numbers, together with their weapons—rifles, revolvers, and even machine-guns—into the houses of the inhabitants of Louvain, and to have obliged them to give them hospitality and allow them to take ambush in their apartments!

Moreover, if what the paymaster relates really happened as he affirms, it is certain that the house numbered 105 in Rue de la Station would have been burnt down. However, this is one of the few houses in the street which have been preserved. It is one of a little group of houses forming the corner of the Rue Melsens and the Rue de la Station, and it is marked as intact on the plan appended to the "White Book." Rudolph's account is therefore inaccurate on the very point concerning which he gives the most details.

Besides, if the accusation had been of a serious nature, the bank employee, whose place of residence was known, would certainly have been examined and his deposition recorded.

Such are the proofs furnished by the "White Book" against the Civic Guard after eight months of inquiries and investigations. In reality, the German authorities, in seeking an explanation to justify the behaviour of their troops at Louvain, have listened to rumours. Does not Captain Josephson report that young men speaking in a variety of languages—that is to say, foreigners—passed in bands, on the eve of the day of attack, through the environs of Louvain on their way to that town? The Captain did not see the young men; he relates the episode from what he was told by a schoolmaster at Louvain, unnamed, who himself had the information from a village innkeeper (also anonymous). Who can believe that the Germans would have let this band of young men pass unchecked, when a simple innkeeper mistrusted them to the point of wishing to have nothing to do with them? The same Captain Josephson was not reassured, either, by the sight of so many young men in the houses in the Rue des Joyeuses Entrées at Louvain, "seeing that the Belgian youth had been called to the colours for war service" (App. D 34). This officer was unaware, then, that general military service (in the proportion, moreover, of about 50 per cent. only of the militia) was not introduced into Belgium until 1913! There is some justification for astonishment at such ignorance and credulity.

* The organisation of the Civic Guard is essentially communal, the units formed by each commune are not grouped in district formations (see General Statement, Chapter I, p. 13, of present volume).

Participation, in civilian clothes, of bodies of regular troops of the Belgian army in the "popular rising."—The report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry, after maintaining that "Belgian soldiers, disguised as civilians, hid themselves in the houses in order to fire from them at a propitious moment, without being seen, on the German troops which were apparently in retreat," is not afraid to go as far as to state that "the Belgian Government itself has never dared to mention the participation of bodies of regular troops of the Belgian army in this affair" (p. 236).

General von Boehn, for his part, affirms several times in his deposition (App. D 1), that among the *francs-tireurs* were many soldiers dressed as private citizens, as might have been proved by the identification discs and parts of uniforms worn underneath the civilian clothes (pp. 240, 241 and 242). With the object of lending more probability to this allegation, the General reports that fairly often, in the fighting, at the side of the empty knapsack of the Belgian soldier a uniform was found, but no body, "the owner having no doubt departed dressed as a civilian" (p. 242). He also says that in the knapsacks of dead soldiers civilian costumes were found, notably the habits of priests. Following the same train of ideas, he relates further that a group of twelve ecclesiastics fired on a German patrol; when these men were arrested they were discovered to be wearing identification discs and military underlinen and boots.*

Captain (formerly Lieutenant) von Sandt reports, in his third deposition made on November 19th, 1914, that *according to what he had been told*, identification discs were frequently (*vielfach*) found on civilians who had been shot (App. D 8). Private Dreher declares, for his part, on December 16th, that, "we found later on civilians who had been shot identification discs, from which I concluded that they were Belgian soldiers" (App. D 19). Finally, Grüner, volunteer automobilist, asserts in his second deposition, received on March 19th, 1915, that he found on many (*bei vielen*) of the persons whom he had orders to search a military identification disc in pocket or purse.

In reply to the audacious assertion of the Military Bureau of Inquiry concerning the participation "of bodies of troops of the regular Belgian army" in the alleged "insurrection" of the population of Louvain, about which the Belgian Government is supposed not to have dared to say a single word, the King's Government declares in the most formal manner that *at no moment of the campaign*, and more especially during the actions around Antwerp, were any kind of operations whatsoever attempted by arrangement between the Belgian army and detachments of soldiers dressed in civilian garments who are supposed, with the aid of citizens, to have acted in the districts occupied by the German army.

As to the allegations of the "White Book" with regard to the presence of Belgian soldiers behind the German lines, they call forth the following remarks:—

(a) The presence of isolated Belgian soldiers behind the enemy's lines ought not to be a matter for surprise; all armies in retreat leave behind them stragglers who, in a friendly country, put on civilian clothes in order to avoid surrender.

(b) The discovery of abandoned knapsacks and uniforms after the fighting can be explained in the same way.

The presence of civilian belongings in the knapsacks of dead soldiers arises from the fact that many Reservists wore, for protection from the inclement weather, civilian under-garments, such as waistcoats or vests, under their military clothes.

Civilian garments, sometimes even belonging to women, have often been found on German prisoners. This fact has been held to represent merely the result of the pillaging carried on in Belgium.

As to what concerns the town of Louvain in particular, the witnesses unanimously declare that to their knowledge no single act of hostility on the part of the population against the German troops took place there. The isolated stragglers who, it seems, were found behind the German lines cannot therefore be incriminated any more than can the inhabitants. A positive piece of information renders this assertion irrefutable: the list of persons massacred by the Germans at Louvain whose bodies could be identified (which is the case with nearly all), does not contain the name of a single soldier (see Part III. of this chapter, p. 283, for this list). Moreover, the German authorities have not made known the inscriptions (names and registration numbers) of any of the so-called identification discs found on the alleged soldiers dressed as civilians who are said to have fired at Louvain on the German troops.

* This absurd story, related by the cavalry sergeant Predöhl and incorporated wholesale by General von Boehn in the final part, entitled *Gutachten* (expert opinion), of his deposition, refutes itself. Indeed, when arraigned before a Court-Martial, these men were apparently acquitted *because it had been impossible to determine which of them had fired* (p. 242).

The explosions in the houses.—The report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry alleges, among other things, in order to prove that the “popular rising” at Louvain had been prepared a long time beforehand, the fact that numerous stores of cartridges and explosives blew up in the burning houses. According to the report this would point to ammunition kept concealed by the populace (p. 236).

It is certainly not surprising that explosions should have occurred in the houses, but it is absurd to attribute them to cartridges and explosives hidden by the inhabitants, who, as has been repeatedly stated, had handed over their arms and ammunition to the communal authorities before the occupation of the town on August 19th.

The detonations may, on the other hand, be partly explained by the bursting of incendiary bombs thrown into the houses, or by the presence there of cartridges, explosives, or incendiary material belonging to the German military. A large number of these lived, in fact, with private people or in hotels. Thus Captain Josephson reports that the inhabitants desired officers only in their houses, and that he could only find billets for the orderlies in houses other than those occupied by the officers (p. 292); the paymaster Rudolph states that, for his part, he found rooms for the officers of the 11th Reserve Railway Company in the Rue de la Station, notably in No. 105 (p. 316). (See also App. D 7, 8, 9, 22, 31, etc., as well as the depositions of witnesses p. 240, and following, of this volume).

It would, moreover, be inconceivable that in a burning town of the importance of Louvain there should not be numerous explosions, especially in certain industrial establishments, at chemists' shops, and even in private houses (explosions of gas, of acetylene tanks, etc.).

One wonders vainly how the Germans were able to determine the fact that the detonations were caused by the explosion of ammunition belonging to *francs-tireurs*.

* * *

The “White Book” is intended to save the reputation of the German army.—Whereas, according to the opinion of Major von Klewitz—an opinion shared by the compilers of the report of the Military Bureau of Berlin—“the behaviour of the German troops at Louvain was exemplary” (App. D 2), accusations against the populace abound in the “White Book,” but do not bear examination. How could it be otherwise? On every page the prejudice of the inquirers is apparent. They have obviously been guided by their anxiety to save the reputation of the German soldiers and to justify, even in the face of evidence, the behaviour of the Imperial army.

Major von Manteuffel affirms stoutly (p. 249) that the inhabitants fired first, from windows and roofs, on the German troops who were marching quietly through the streets, without any provocation on their part (*ohne jede Veranlassung*). He can only know this, however, by hearsay, for at the moment when the events occurred he was dining; it was a gendarme who came and informed him that civilians had fired on the troops (App. D 3). He seems, however, himself to have become aware, a little later, of a “tremendous” fusillade coming from the houses surrounding the Town Hall (in the course of which three men were wounded and one horse killed). However this may be, Major von Manteuffel cannot affirm from personal knowledge that the inhabitants were the first to fire.*

The report of the Military Bureau of Berlin maintains that the fire could not be prevented from spreading from house to house (p. 235). Lieutenant Ernst Ibach, adjutant of the 15th Mobile Dépôt Column, observing that the Cathedral of Saint Pierre was on fire, affirms, in explanation of the fact, that the church caught fire solely in consequence of the wind having caused the flames coming from neighbouring houses to spread towards it (App. D 4).

Against this biased deposition we may set the words of a neutral citizen, M. L.-H. Grondijs, formerly professor at the Technical Institute of Dordrecht, who affirms that at the moment when the flames began to burst from the small tower *in the middle of the roof*, all the neighbouring houses were still intact (see p. 253). The German assertions in this matter are equally disproved by the observations

* The Belgian witnesses and those who are natives of neutral countries are unanimous in denying that shots were fired by civilians on German troops, but it is proved that German soldiers penetrated by force into certain houses, from the windows of which they fired into the street. (See Documents 2, 4 and 29 in Part III. of this chapter.)

made by Mgr. Deploige and M. Hervé de Gruben, who visited the Collegiate Church of Saint-Pierre on September 1st.*

The same desire to make guilty persons appear innocent is seen in Sergeant Hilmer, when he declares that he received formal and express orders not to touch a hair of the head of a woman or child (App. D 37); in Lieutenant Dörffer, who affirms that he saw none but men shot (App. D 44); in Captain von Esmarch, who reports that the soldiers were most careful to see that the women and children were spared (App. D 46); and in Corporal Höhne, who sees a woman with three children go through groups of soldiers without being in any way molested (App. D 36, p. 296), etc., etc., etc.

Long dissertations are not necessary to show the value that should be attributed to such evidence. It is enough, unfortunately, to invoke the memory of the old men, women and children assassinated at Louvain (see Part III., Document 31, especially p. 286), and to remember that over 2,000 houses were burnt at Louvain and in the neighbouring communes.

* * *

The Misgivings of the Leaders.—Finally, it is the same anxiety to find a justification for the “reprisals” which gave rise to the series of presentiments that form the subject of several witnesses’ depositions.

Captain von Esmarch, commander of the Headquarter’s Staff of the 9th Reserve Army Corps, is in the Place du Peuple† with some horses and the first detachment of the Generalkommando, towards evening on August 25th; having only a small guard to watch over the transport, he does not feel secure and asks the regiments marching past for a company of reinforcements. Why this fear? The captain explains that on his arrival the streets were fairly animated and sprinkled with people walking about, but towards evening the traffic grew less, and suddenly the inhabitants disappeared, while the iron shutters of the windows were let down (App. D 46). Why should this behaviour astonish the witness, considering that the Commandant had ordered the population to return to their homes at night-fall and had forbidden them to come out of their dwellings after 8 o’clock? One asks vainly how this peaceful and submissive behaviour on the part of the inhabitants of Louvain could have aroused in the witness a feeling that he was not safe.

An officer warns the soldiers of the 162nd Regiment which, coming from the east, made its entry into Louvain by road between 9 and 10 p.m. (German time, 60 minutes in advance), on August 25th, against the water that the inhabitants had placed in the streets for their use (App. D 36, p. 295).

According to Alfred Schmidt, of the 53rd Landwehr Regiment, a lieutenant assembled his men on August 25th, shortly before the outbreak of the firing, and recommended them to be on their guard, as their position did not seem very safe (App. D 47).

Lieutenant-Colonel Schweder, commander of the 2nd Battalion of Light Infantry of the Landsturm of Neuss, receives on August 25th, towards 5 o’clock in the evening, an order from the Staff officer, Major von Rosenberg, to lead a company to the north-west exit from Louvain. He executes the order, and leaves the company, under the command of Lieutenant von Sandt, at the gates of Louvain, by a little after 7 p.m.; but at this moment, feeling, he says, that it would be more useful inside the town than outside, he makes the company return, and goes himself towards Louvain station, warning them to hold themselves ready for an alarm (*sich alarmbereit aufzustellen*) (App. D 7). Why did he act in this way, without orders, when his superior had given him instructions to occupy a position on the confines of the town? The lieutenant-colonel says simply that a feeling urged him to act thus. And he tries to justify this feeling by relating how, on returning on foot to Louvain, he saw that the houses were not lighted up, that there were only a few people in

* “Our first visit, on Tuesday, September 1st, was to the Church of Saint-Pierre. We could see even from the outside that the belfry and roofing were completely destroyed. Inside the sight was distressing; the débris of the collapsed arch and of the melted bells strewed the pavement; fires had been lighted in each of the side chapels of the great central nave and their entire contents, furniture and pictures, destroyed; in the middle of the choir another pyre formed of chairs, had ruined the high altar and damaged the tabernacle. The celebrated pictures by Bouts, *La Dernière Cène* and *Le Martyre de Saint Erasme*, were placed in one of the chapels round the choir. If the fire had spread there these masterpieces would have been lost. They were not, as it happens, removed from the church until after the fire, on Thursday, August 27th.” (Hervé de Gruben, *Les Allemands à Louvain*. Paris, Plon-Nourrit, 1915, p. 127.)

† According to the Report of the German Military Bureau of Inquiry (p. 234) and the deposition of General von Boehn (App. D 1), Von Esmarch was in the Place du Marché and not the Place du Peuple.

the streets—a handful of persons were standing in little groups in front of the houses—and that the town was almost empty of soldiers.* Of the German military he only saw in passing a few small detachments escorting isolated baggage units.

Certainly there seems nothing suspicious in the behaviour of the inhabitants. But was Louvain really empty of soldiers? This fact does not appear to be implied in all the depositions, particularly in those of General von Boehn (App. D 1), of Major von Manteuffel (App. D 3), of Fritz Messelke (App. D 15), of Lieutenant Dörffer (App. D 44), and of Captain von Esmarch (App. D 46, p. 319). Lieutenant von Sandt, who marched at the head of his company as it returned to Louvain, and who arrived at the station at about 10 minutes to 8, even reports that up to the Town Hall he passed numerous German troops and baggage trains (App. D 8). The report of the Military Bureau of Berlin states merely that there were not “particularly large numbers of troops” at Louvain on August 25th between 7 and 8 o’clock in the evening. The declarations of inhabitants of the town affirm, on the contrary, the presence of numbers of German soldiers at Louvain at the time when the fusillade began. It will have been remarked, moreover, in regard to this point, that there is a contradiction between Lieutenant-Colonel Schweder and Lieutenant von Sandt, who returned along the road to the station almost simultaneously.

It may be asked whether the details furnished by these two officers concerning the peaceful return to the town of Von Sandt’s company were not given with the object of being able to contest the statement made by Belgian witnesses, that the German troops returned to Louvain in disorder, that there was a scrimmage and confusion, in the midst of which German detachments, thinking that they were dealing with the enemy, shot at one another, thus causing a panic that spread from man to man.†

The deposition of Willy Muesfeld, non-commissioned officer attached to the “Generalkommando” of the 9th Reserve Army Corps, justifies the hypothesis that such confusion might have arisen. He states that on August 25th, a little before 9 o’clock in the evening, he was in the market-place, ready to leave for action, because the English were said to be in the neighbourhood. At this moment the order was countermanded, and almost at the same instant the fusillade broke out on all sides (App. D 39).

* * *

The recalling of witnesses.—It is significant that various witnesses whose first depositions doubtless did not meet the wishes of the German authorities were recalled before the examiners.

Richard Grüner, who had made a deposition at Altona on March 1st, 1915, was summoned to Berlin on March 19th to make a second deposition there before the Military Bureau of Inquiry; it is really extraordinary that the very precise details, the recital of which occupies a page and a half of the “White Book,” given by him on this occasion, on the subject of the so-called proceedings carried out on the night of August 25th–26th, 1914—when 80 to 100 civilians were shot—should have escaped him on March 1st (App. D 38). Kurt Brandt, Sub-Lieutenant of Reserve, who on September 27th had drawn up a report addressed to the 52nd Infantry Regiment, was summoned to make a verbal deposition on December 18th (App. D 48). Lieutenant von Sandt, after making two depositions on September 17th, was called up to make a third two months later (App. D 8). Finally, Hüllermeier, non-commissioned officer, was also examined twice by the tribunal of the General Government of Belgium on September 17th and November 19th (App. D 10).

* * *

Improbabilities and Contradictions.—It is not possible to note all the improbabilities and contradictions found in the “White Book,” but it is necessary to point out the most glaring among them.

A.—What is to be thought of the charge concerning boiling pitch, enclosed in little tin boxes, which was supposed to have been thrown on the soldiers?

* “To my knowledge,” he says, “no other troops were posted in Louvain (*hat in Löwen gestanden*) on August 25th but Von Sandt’s company.” According to Lieutenant-Colonel Schweder, only 100 men of this company were in the town on the date in question, another 100 had been detached for sentry and outpost duty.

† It is noteworthy that if, like the prefatory Note to the “White Book” (p. 6), the report of the German Military Bureau alludes to this statement and attempts to refute it (p. 237), Von Sandt is the only one of the witnesses to oppose a formal contradiction to it, in his third deposition of November 19th, 1914 (App. D 8, p. 258).

With regard to this, we need take no notice of what is said by August Zander, private in the Third Ersatz Company of the 5th Infantry Regiment of Hanover, for he confines himself to reporting what soldiers told him; some sentries had suffered greatly, according to these soldiers, from the throwing of the boiling pitch (App. D 25). This is not a deposition, but a rumour.

Another declaration claims to rest on direct observation. But how could it be physically possible to put boiling pitch into little metal boxes, which would necessarily assume the same temperature as the pitch, and which must have been handled by those who wished to make use of them as a weapon? And, indeed, Stanislas Dadaczynski, private in the 6th Company of the 27th Reserve Infantry Regiment, who reports the fact, is obliged to recognise that this so-called boiling pitch was no longer hot enough to cause serious injury (App. D 29).

Moreover, the doctors and ambulance attendants whose depositions are recorded in the "White Book" do not make the slightest allusion to injuries of this kind in their evidence (App. D 9, 21, 23, 26).

B.—Major von Klewitz, Staff-Officer of the 9th Reserve Corps, had the impression that firing was going on from machine-guns from the Hôtel Marie-Thérèse on to the Place de la Gare; in support of his statement he declares that a line of bullets was remarked next day on the gate of the station* (App. D 2). But neither he nor Lieutenant Dörffler (App. D 44) affirms that any machine-guns were discovered in the building when the soldiers took it by storm, or among the ruins after they had burnt it. The chauffeur Robert Weiss claims likewise to have heard the sound of a machine-gun working in a hotel in the Place de la Station (App. D 40); the chauffeur Grüner heard the same noise in the Place du Peuple (App. D 38). Richard Hermansen, Captain of the Ersatz Battalion of the 76th Infantry Regiment, heard on getting out of a railway carriage a lively fusillade, in the midst of which he distinguished a regular noise which he took for that of a machine-gun (*das ich für Maschinengewehrfeuer hielt*) (App. D 42). According to Walter Schaefer, Captain of the 18th Regiment of Reserve Field Artillery, it was commonly reported that there was a machine-gun on the tower of the church (App. D 49.)† Finally, Stanislas Dadaczynski, private in the 6th Company of the 27th Reserve Infantry Regiment, is also convinced that machine-guns were used (App. D 29); he only judges, however, from the sound, as does likewise the Landwehr soldier Westerkamp, who is no less positive than he (App. D 37).

As it has already been remarked, if there had been machine-guns at Louvain in the hands of civilians they would inevitably have been discovered, for minute searches were made by the officers and men in the houses whence they alleged that there had been firing; at the very least, traces of them would have been found in the ruins, and this discovery would have been reported without fail.

Yet, as in the case of Aershot or Andenne, where it is likewise asserted that civilians worked machine-guns, so too as regards Louvain, no positive proof of the fact is supplied. The so-called witnesses base their assertions on mere suppositions and deductions; the report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry itself says no more than that "the firing crackled in several places, as if machine-guns were being used" (p. 234). In truth, it is in no wise astonishing that the soldiers should have heard the firing of machine-guns, since the German troops used them against the population.‡

Captain von Esmarch not only heard machine-guns in the evening of August 25th; he distinguished, as well, such violent reports that he took them at first for cannon. As there was no artillery, on his own assertion, he considers that only one explanation is possible, namely, that the inhabitants threw hand-grenades from the houses on the German troops. He entirely excludes the hypothesis that grenades were flung by these troops themselves. This is, however, the only admissible hypothesis, in view of the fact that the *Belgian field force* itself did not possess any hand-grenades before the year 1915. How could the civil population have had any at its disposal in August, 1914? Although he *saw* nothing, Captain von Esmarch does not hesitate to make the assertion (App. D 46, p. 320).

* Inhabitants of Louvain declare in the most formal manner that there was not a single trace of bullets on this gate.

† Schaefer does not say which of the churches in Louvain was the one in question.

‡ According to Major von Klewitz (App. D 2, p. 246), the Germans, on August 26th, even used two cannon, with which the streets leading to the station were swept, while, according to General von Boehn, a section of artillery was sent to Louvain on August 27th; this battery destroyed several houses (App. D 1).

It is strange that Major von Manteuffel, Commander of the 15th Mobile Dépôt Column, does not breathe a word in his deposition—which is, by reason of its author's status, one of the most important in the chapter of the "White Book" concerning Louvain—about machine-guns worked by civilians; the fact is all the more significant because the deposition of this officer contains a special concluding section in which Major von Manteuffel declares that he is speaking as an expert (*gutachtlich*), as commander, and as a soldier (App. D 3, p. 247 to 249). The *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*, however (according to the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of September 5th, 1914) reported the following declaration, taken from a Dutch newspaper, and made, for purposes of publication, to the representative of the latter by Major von Manteuffel. The portion of the article in the Dutch paper which was inserted in the *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* runs as follows: "Belgian troops had hidden in the houses of the citizens of Louvain and had changed their clothing in order to surprise during the night the Staff of Louvain, which was at the Station. To prove this, the German Major showed me the two Belgian machine-guns. Further, he showed me several dead Belgians who wore beneath their civilian dress Belgian military under-garments. Two of them were still wearing beneath their peasant's blouses of blue linen a complete Belgian military uniform." Nothing remains in the deposition inserted in the "White Book" of the declaration and demonstrations made to a journalist.*

It is, in truth, scarcely necessary to refute all these allegations concerning the use of machine-guns by the civilians at Louvain. The Belgian army, who, at the beginning of the war, had only a very limited number of these guns at their disposal, did not entrust any to the pretended *francs-tireurs*!

C.—The general report of the events of Louvain contains the following passage:

"The horror of this attack was intensified by the darkness that reigned over the town, for the lighting system in the streets had been destroyed" (p. 235).

In reality, if the public lighting system did not work, it was because it had been destroyed, at least as far as the gas is concerned† by the very persons who try to use the absence of light as an argument against the civil population.

Hans Ludwig Oldenburg, non-commissioned officer of the 3rd Company of the Ersatz Battalion No. 162, relates, indeed, that although the darkness of night had already fallen, the town, unlike the districts he had passed through on the preceding night, was lit by a considerable number of gas lamps; shortly afterwards a fusillade having broken out, the soldiers broke the lamps, "that they should not serve as targets for the enemy" (App. D 36, p. 294).

Max Höhne, corporal in the 4th Company of the same battalion, states that it was already dark on arriving at Louvain, but that the gas lamps were lighted; he adds that after the troops had been fired on they smashed the lamps, so that nothing more could be seen (App. D 36, p. 295).

Therefore it could not be argued against the inhabitants that they deliberately plunged the town in darkness in order to facilitate their attacks.

The darkness, moreover, did not prevent certain witnesses, as has been seen above (pp. 222-3), from making very accurate observations (App. D 2, deposition of Major von Klewitz; D. 45, deposition of Rudolph; and D. 9, deposition of Dr. Berghausen).

D.—The head doctor (*Oberarzt*), Dr. Berghausen, who, by the definiteness of his accusations as well as by reason of his apparent calm and of his social position, seems to merit special confidence, formally declares that he saw in the Rue de la Station a lively and "murderous" discharge of shots upon officers and soldiers, none of whom, by the way, was killed nor apparently even wounded, from the second storey of the house bearing the number 120 (App. D 9). He expatiates on this charge in order to prove that the officers and soldiers had not been the first to shoot. However, as has been shown above, the orders given were to burn without legal formalities all the houses from which firing had taken place. If therefore Dr. Berghausen's assertion were correct, the house numbered 120 in the Rue de la Station must have been set on fire.

But what happened?

* Major von Manteuffel's deposition is, indeed, completely silent also on the subject of Belgian soldiers disguised as civilians who were supposed to have taken part in the "rising" of the people of Louvain. It is noteworthy that this witness, unlike the majority of the rest, was in Louvain some weeks; he made his deposition there on September 23rd, 1914.

† Corporal Bastian states, on the other hand, that the electric lighting, which had worked the day before, had been destroyed on the night of August 25th-26th (App. D 78).

No. 120 is one of the few important houses in the Rue de la Station which have been spared. The plan affixed to the "White Book" itself permits this fact to be seen; for it mentions, in the part of the Rue de la Station reaching from the Rue Juste-Lipse to the Place de la Gare, a group of several houses which were not set on fire; in the midst of them stands the dwelling numbered 120. The truth of this state of affairs is, moreover, attested by information which it proved possible to obtain on the spot.*

This discovery of fact proves that Dr. Berghausen's account cannot be exact, and justifies the supposition that this man, who could not see, since it was pitch-dark (p. 260, l. 22), intended to do a patriotic deed in surrounding his statements with precise details.

E.—Numbers of contradictions, finally, are to be found in the depositions of the "White Book" concerning the rockets supposed to have been seen at about 8 p.m. on August 25th, the discharge of which the German authorities—with a few exceptions—cite as one of the chief proofs of premeditated aggression on the part of the inhabitants.

We find that Joseph Fenes (App. D 22), non-commissioned officer, claims to have seen, just before the fusillade, a rocket go up on the Place de la Station, where he happened to be; another non-commissioned officer, Frederick Hüllermeier, who was in the same place, and who belongs, like Fenes, to the 1st Company of the 2nd Infantry Battalion of the Neuss Landsturm, formally declares, on the other hand, that he saw nothing of the sort (App. D 10). Lieutenant von Sandt, commanding the said company, who was also in Place de la Gare with his men, some of whom claim to have noticed some luminous signals, likewise said nothing (App. D 8). And yet these signals must have been visible for a fairly long time, for one of the men, Hubert Küppers, of the 1st Company of the Battalion of the Neuss Landsturm, reports having observed first a green rocket, which went up, then came down again in a trail of little luminous balls, and went out before reaching the ground. Scarcely had this green rocket vanished than a red rocket went up over the town, which, like the first, transformed itself into little luminous balls of blue, red and green. Only after the extinction of these did the fusillade begin (App. D 13). According to certain witnesses, there was only one rocket (App. D 7, 12, 14, 15, 16), while others saw two (App. D 13 and 17); to some the rocket was red (App. D 14), to others it was green (App. D 13, 18, 46), while to a third it was blue (App. D 12), and to a fourth merely light (App. D 17).

It is noteworthy that neither General von Boehn, nor the Staff-Major von Klewitz, nor Major von Manteuffel, commander of the 15th Mobile Depot Column (who spent several weeks in Louvain) makes the slightest reference to these supposed luminous signals. Must it be concluded that they attached no importance to them? It is true General von Boehn and Major von Klewitz did not return from the field of battle to the town until after 9 o'clock in the evening; but the General refrains from mentioning the rockets among the five classes of facts which go to prove, according to him, that the revolt was organised in advance (p. 242). On this important point the General did not therefore wish to risk his signature. The Military Bureau of Berlin is less scrupulous and does not hesitate to make the affirmation (pp. 234 and 236).

It appears, on the other hand, from the declaration of M. Albert van Hecke, Professor at Louvain University, that he saw German officers throw a rocket from a moving motor-car, at the Tirlemont gate, after 8 o'clock at night on August 25th.†

There is nothing astonishing in this. In times of peace, the German army was already provided with rockets of the sort (*Leuchtraketen*, *Leuchtkugeln*) which serve as signals in the field, according to a code agreed upon; a special pistol exists in this army for the discharge of rockets.

The Belgian army itself possessed, on the contrary, no instrument of the sort; it was only recently provided with it. The rockets fired at Louvain could only, therefore, have been a German signal. There is doubtless no other ground for the silence observed on this point by General von Boehn and Majors von Klewitz and von Manteuffel.

* From information recently received it appears that the house in question was spared because the search that was made of the premises revealed nothing suspicious. What remains after this of the details in Dr. Berghausen's deposition, relating to the shots supposed to have been aimed from this house at the Germans?

† See Document 6 of Part III of this chapter.

Number of German victims of "francs-tireurs" at Louvain.—What is the total number of losses inflicted on the German troops at Louvain by the "*francs-tireurs*" ? The publication of this piece of information would seem to be of the greatest importance to the German authorities, for it would allow them, if they were in a position to do so, to show that the "reprisals" made were in proportion to the gravity of the offence.

The documents in the chapter of the "White Book" dealing with the burning and massacres at Louvain—a chapter closed more than seven months after the event—do not, however, provide even an approximate figure on this point. They only contain fragmentary indications, in almost every case lacking in precision.

The report of General von Boehn, Commander of the 9th Reserve Army Corps (App. D 1, p. 240) informs us that the total losses of the Staff of the "Generalkommando" amounted to 5 officers, 2 employees, 23 men and 95 horses, including killed, wounded, and missing; no distinction is made between the three categories. As five wounded officers are mentioned by name, it seems there were no officers among the killed.* These five officers are the cavalry Captains (*Rittmeister*) von Harnier and von Esmarch, Captain von Raven, Lieutenant von Oertzen, and Sub-Lieutenant Risler. The same indications, with the exception of the names, are to be found in the general report of the Military Bureau of Inquiry (p. 234). These same casualties, at least some of them, are also mentioned in App. D 5, p. 253 (Lieutenant Telemann reports that among the 30 to 35 wounded brought to the military hospital, was *Rittmeister* von Esmarch) as well as in App. D 40, p. 307 (Weiss, volunteer automobilist,† saw *Rittmeister* von Esmarch and von Harnier, wounded), and in App. D 39, p. 306 (deposition of non-commissioned officer Muesfeldt, who took charge of the wounded *Rittmeister* von Esmarch).

It is even almost certain that it is to some of the wounded already mentioned on pages 234, 240, 253, 306 and 307 that allusion is made in App. D 3, p. 248 (three of the orderly officers of General von Boehn are seriously wounded, reports Major von Manteuffel, and about 90 horses strayed, wounded, or killed).

The report of the Bureau of Inquiry contains no recapitulatory statement of the losses sustained by any military unit whatever, other than that which concerns the Staff of the "Generalkommando." This lengthy report of five full pages only mentions in one other passage the German victims of the *francs-tireurs*, declaring in an entirely vague manner "that many German soldiers were wounded and some (*einige*) killed before it was possible for them to make any defence (p. 234, par. 5).‡

In the appendices to the report of the Military Bureau there is again mention of German casualties on p. 246 (a number of wounded); p. 248 (as the result of a "tremendous" discharge of shots, wounded to the number of three, so Major von Manteuffel believes, were brought to the Town Hall); p. 250 (several wounded); p. 274 (several soldiers dead); pp. 294 and 295 (seven wounded in all, some perhaps twice mentioned); pp. 255, par. 2, and 257, par. 1 (treating of the same five or six wounded soldiers); p. 279 (one wounded); p. 281 (one wounded); p. 296 (half-a-dozen wounded); pp. 283 and 284 (on August 26th, *in broad daylight*, some people passing in the street fired on a convoy of wounded on their way to the station, under the protection of the Red Cross and accompanied by nuns—some soldiers and one wounded man were hit); p. 285 (several wounded and one killed); p. 297, par. 6 (some wounded); p. 300; (one wounded); p. 301 (a certain number seriously wounded); p. 304 (on August 26th, some comrades of the volunteer automobilist Grüner were wounded at his side). Major von Klewitz reports further (App. D 2, p. 245), that two soldiers were wounded

* Lieutenant Dörffer mentions, on the other hand (App. D 44, p. 314) according to the declaration of a third party, the death of an officer of No. 76 Reserve Infantry Regiment; another officer (App. D 2, p. 246), *while marching at the head of a column of infantry*, is said to have been fatally shot by a civilian *perched in a tree* (in an avenue, it seems)!

† This man asserts that he had to seize a Belgian doctor by the arm to force him to dress Von Esmarch's wound, because the staff of the Belgian field hospital refused to do so. He adds that they fired on Von Esmarch from the very monastery where the field hospital was established, at the moment when he was being brought in. Captain von Esmarch makes no reference in his own deposition to these two incidents. He declares he was taken to a Belgian military hospital, but at the time when he was there (he only stayed one night) he took this hospital for a monastery, because there were a great many monks there. Weiss, the automobilist, fell into the same error, as has just been seen.

‡ Two so-called deeds of atrocity are, it is true, recorded in the report (p. 235), relying upon the account of two soldiers (App. D 35 and 37); the report also re-echoes the words of two more private soldiers (App. D 25 and 29), one of whom repeats tales that he has heard, declaring that the German troops were sprinkled with burning pitch (p. 235). None of the German doctors or attendants whose depositions are published in the chapter on Louvain mention facts of this kind. Lieutenant von Sandt, in *his third deposition* of November 19th, 1914, speaks also of mutilations *attested by soldiers*; he himself saw none.

while trying to arrest an armed civilian in a room of the Hôtel Métropole ; they succeeded in killing the civilian, and then threw him, without more ado, out of the window into the street.* It must have occurred repeatedly that the same casualties have figured several times, having been seen by different people ; but it is impossible in most cases to recognise whether mention of them has been made twice over, or even more often. In spite of this ground for erroneous impressions, a perusal of the depositions in the " White Book " leaves the reader with the feeling that the losses sustained by the German troops at Louvain were very inconsiderable ; the number of horses killed appears relatively large.†

It is, moreover, sometimes impossible to make out whether the wounded received into the field hospitals came from the neighbouring battlefields or from the street-fighting in the town ; thus Meschede, non-commissioned officer (App. D 43) states without further details that during the evening of August 25th, forty to fifty German wounded were brought to him ; as he certifies on oath that two of these wounded had been struck by small shot, there is reason to believe that the others (or at least a large number of the others) received their wounds on the battlefield. (On August 25th engagements took place between Louvain and Malines ; towards six o'clock in the evening a battle developed about two kilometres to the north-west of the town (App. D 8)).

The head doctor Berghausen himself saw during the various days only four soldiers wounded by small shot (App. D 9, p. 261) ; the assistant doctor Keuten (App. D 21) declares that he treated two cases. Why did not these two doctors give their one-sided affirmations the character of incontestable facts by calling on Belgian colleagues to examine the wounded and assist in the extraction of the bullets ?

The non-commissioned officer Hüllermeier, examined on September 17th—that is, three weeks after the events—declares that a " terrible " fire was opened from the houses in the Place de la Station on the Germans who were there (App. D 10). At his side he saw Fenes, non-commissioned officer (whose deposition is to be found on pp. 276 and 277), wounded in the head. He adds that several soldiers of his company were, *according to what he was told*, grievously wounded (*sollen schwer verwundet sein*), and remarks that fortunately the inhabitants fired much too high, otherwise the majority of the officers and men would doubtless have been killed or wounded. Questioned again two months later, on November 19th, Hüllermeier is much more definite ; his recollection has had time to clarify. " Many among us were wounded," he says, " and some even mortally " (p. 264) ; he no longer mentions the explanation (henceforth superfluous) of the badly-directed fire on the part of the inhabitants.

Other Germans besides these only owe their safety to circumstances beyond the control of the *francs-tireurs*. Thus a group of officers and men completely escaped what was termed by Dr. Berghausen a " murderous " fire (p. 260), thanks to the darkness ; whereas Lieutenant von Sandt considers that his company owes the good fortune of only having five wounded to the fact that the inhabitants aimed too high (p. 257). A group of ten soldiers, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Schweder, traverse, without a single loss, a space of about 500 metres through an " incessant rain of bullets " fired on them from " most of the houses in the street " (p. 255). As for the tar thrown on the Germans, it has been seen above that at least in one of the cases it was fortunately not hot enough to cause serious burns (pp. 281 and 286), as the soldier Stanislas Dadaczynski, who reports the fact, is careful to remark.

The adventures of the soldier Schmidt deserve special attention (App. D 47).

This man passed five different times, on the evening of August 25th, through fusillades, one of which was as violent as rapid individual firing (*das reinste Schnellfeuer*) ; finally, he fell, in rather a mysterious manner (a cellar-grating is supposed to have given way beneath his weight) into a cellar together with two of his comrades. At the bottom of this cellar he was at once fired at, without being otherwise molested, although he did not succeed in getting out of the cellar unaided. After some time, he was taken out by a cavalry sergeant passing in the street. On the following day, August 26th, at about 1 o'clock, Schmidt was once again exposed to a fusillade which lasted half an hour, while he was at the station at Louvain in a

* It has already been noticed (see p. 30) that as a general rule the *francs-tireurs* allowed themselves to be arrested without offering any resistance.

† The German authorities had the bodies of the German soldiers at once removed. Yet the culpability of the populace would eventually have been irrefutably established, had the origin of the shots been established.

departing Red Cross train. Schmidt was not once struck by the bullets, but he broke his wrist falling into the cellar. His two companions whom he abandoned to their fate—for they could not stand—were, as reported to him next day, seriously injured ; but Schmidt does not make it clear whether their injuries came from their fall—which seems probable—or if they were due to the *francs-tireurs*.

Stories of this kind, which it is absolutely necessary to relate in detail, enable us to estimate the value of some of the evidence produced by the German authorities to justify the burning of 2,117 houses and the massacre of more than 200 inhabitants at Louvain, Kessel-Loo, Corbeek-Loo, Hérent and Héverlé.

The lack of precision in indicating the losses sustained reaches its climax in the deposition of the volunteer automobilist Weiss. This man, who declares he heard machine-guns fired from the houses facing the station, confines himself to a brief statement concerning the effect of the fire of the *francs-tireurs*: “We had some losses” (*Wir hatten Verluste*, p. 308). Oldenburg, non-commissioned officer, sees a bomb, thrown from a house, burst ten metres from the spot where he is standing, but he *does not know* if anyone was struck by the projectile (App. D 36). Rudolph, the paymaster, who declares that firing took place from houses in the Place de la Station in the direction of this square and the neighbouring streets, *which were at this moment filled with German troops*, as he himself states, makes not the slightest mention either of wounded or killed (App. D 45).

The natural conclusion from the lack of accurate information on the subject of the victims of the so-called “rising” of Louvain is the following: the number of German soldiers supposed to have been killed or wounded in this town by the *francs-tireurs** is in such disproportion to the “reprisals” that, if it were announced, the complete impossibility of any justification for these would be revealed only too strikingly. The reports of the German Military Bureau of Inquiry concerning Aerschot and Dinant are, as we know, just as discreet as to the number of the alleged victims of the *francs-tireurs* in these two towns.† We are confronted, therefore, not by an involuntary omission, but by a regular system.

* * *

The Criticisms directed by the German Military Bureau against the Belgian Commission of Enquiry.—The above pages confine themselves especially to contesting the evidence contained in the “White Book.” The course of events, as they appear from the declarations of Belgian witnesses, has been given in Part I. of this chapter. Several of them are reproduced below. A large number of the witnesses are people of high culture, University professors, members of the communal administration, ecclesiastics, manufacturers, lawyers, etc., whose depositions certainly do not deserve less credence than those of the German officers and men who ordered and carried out the massacres and burning. It is well to recall in this connection the fact that the Military Bureau of Inquiry of Berlin was not afraid to declare, in its report on the “rising” at Louvain, that the accusations formulated on the Belgian side against the German troops are based on “hurried interviews between highly excited and for the most part uncultivated persons, and equally excited examiners” (p. 236). This judgment was pronounced, not immediately after the events, but on April 10th, 1915.

Although the German inquiry was made without haste, it confines itself to noting, on the subject of the importance of the damage caused by the burning, that less than a sixth of the town was a prey to the flames, practically the district situated in the vicinity of the station. It does not state that 2,117 houses were set on fire at Louvain and in the communes of Kessel-Loo, Corbeek-Loo, Hérent and Héverlé, and that it was the finest parts of the town that were destroyed.

The Military Bureau of Berlin, in reproaching the Belgian commission with having published on August 31st the account of a witness of the burning, has doubtless lost sight of the fact that the Emperor William himself telegraphed to the President of the United States on September 4th that the town of Louvain was entirely destroyed, with the exception of its fine Town Hall. The Belgian Commission, since September 10th, has stated in its third report, and this time on its own responsibility, that a part of the town of Louvain had been destroyed, thus correcting what was erroneous on

* The Belgian witnesses are unanimous in declaring that no German soldier was killed or wounded by Belgian civilians or soldiers dressed as civilians at Louvain.

† The report of the Military Bureau relative to Andenne says nothing of the number of German victims of bombs, hand-grenades, and machine-guns supposed to have been used against them by the inhabitants of this town. The story of a hundred soldiers scalded at Andenne is known to be purely imaginary (see p. 131).

this point in the account it had reproduced in inverted commas in its second report, dated August 31st. In its fifth report of September 25th, the same Commission thought it might, with a moderation that testifies eloquently to its regard for truth, fix the number 894 as the number of houses burnt on the territory of the town of Louvain alone; it is known that in reality this number is 1,120.

Finally, the Military Bureau of Berlin falsely accuses (p. 237) the Belgian Committee of Inquiry of having announced that Mgr. Coenraets and Père Schmidt had been executed (see p. 73 of present volume).

It is, moreover, just that those should be denied the right of blaming others who dare to write, concerning the charges brought by the Belgian Committee of Inquiry in regard to the behaviour of the German troops at Louvain—"These charges are false; it is an established fact, on the contrary, that the German troops acted in an irreproachable manner and committed no act in violation of the law of nations." (Report of the German Military Bureau of Inquiry on the events of Louvain, p. 233.)

PART III.

DOCUMENTS AND DEPOSITIONS OF BELGIAN AND NEUTRAL WITNESSES.*

1. *Deposition of M. Auguste Dubois, Advocate at Louvain.*

At about three o'clock on August 19th, 1914, the first Germans entered Louvain. All went well until Monday the 24th. On this day, towards nine o'clock at night, requisitions having been made on the banks in the morning, the Burgomaster, M. Colins, who, I believe, had been taken as a hostage on Friday, August 21st, with MM. Schmit and Vanderkelen, and was not released for several days, was led virtually by force to the station by German soldiers. An officer pretended that apertures had been made in the walls of the station to fire on the German troops. They threatened M. Colins at the point of the revolver to burn the town if a single shot were fired at the Germans. A hot meal was demanded for the 250 men who had just arrived; the food was supplied by inhabitants in the neighbourhood. Then new demands were made: 90 mattresses were required for the 250 men to sleep on. Alderman Schmit, learning what was taking place, intervened with the Commandant. He had the Burgomaster released and order was restored. A promise had been made that no more hostages would be taken after Tuesday, the 25th, but when the day came, fresh hostages, Mgr. Coenraets and Justice Maes, had been designated. In the afternoon of the 25th the uneasiness of the garrison increased; the rumbling of the cannon could be heard; the battle was approaching Louvain. Soon the baggage trains of the German army returned in complete disorder. Soon after a lively fusillade was heard in the streets of Louvain. In my opinion, the Germans billeted in Louvain made a mistake, and fired on their own people who were returning into the town. Some minutes later the rifle fire increased still more, mingled with the roar of artillery; fires broke out in every quarter. Shots followed on shots; the town was a sheet of flame; the Germans smashed in the doors to set fire to the houses.

On Wednesday morning the destruction was complete; the Boulevard de Diest, the Rue de Diest, the Boulevard de Tirlemont, the Place de la Gare were nothing but a huge furnace. Having taken refuge with my family in a part of the Boulevard de Diest that was not yet threatened by the flames, we were requested by a German patrol to leave this refuge and betake ourselves to the station, the only safe retreat, for the bombardment would soon destroy everything. We went to the station; there in the square lay 15 corpses. I was arrested and separated from my relatives, and told that the women and children would be taken to Germany, but that the train would not leave till next day. The men were to serve as hostages. At the first shot fired on the troops by a civilian we were to be shot. We accompanied the soldiers to Hérent, where, in the first rank of the units, we received a baptism of fire, as a slight engagement was taking place at this moment between infantry. Then we were led towards Bueken by the high road from Malines to Hérent. All along the route everything was laid waste; all the houses were burning to such an extent that we had to race along on account of the heat and smoke. We arrived at last at Bueken; the battalion of the 90th Infantry Regiment of the Landwehr was drawn up in a square. The prisoners were put in the middle, our hands were bound behind our backs and we were placed in a row in a depression. I was informed that we were all going to be shot. I asked to be allowed to write a line of farewell to my wife; permission was granted me. I

* The depositions and reports relating to the sack of Louvain are extremely numerous; a certain number only are reproduced here. The names of some of their authors, who are exposed to German reprisals in Belgium, cannot be revealed. Other depositions will be found in the appendix of the report of the English Committee of Inquiry on the German atrocities, presided over by Viscount Bryce.

wrote and the card was handed to the Hauptmann, who undertook to have it delivered. We were made to sit down whilst a picket approached us ; we all thought that the hour of death had come. It was not so ; we were left seated for ten minutes ; then we were brought back to the neighbourhood of the troops and we marched, with our hands still bound, in the direction of Campenhout, where we arrived about eight o'clock in the evening, after having been forced to pass through masses of German troops, who did not cease to ill-treat us in every way, striking us with whips and lances. The officer who accompanied us, and whose courtesy I wish to acknowledge, even had to interfere repeatedly on our behalf. We spent a terrible night, all shut up in the church. Towards half-past four in the morning they came and informed us that those who wished to make their confession must make haste, for we were going to be shot. At five o'clock we were told that we were free. Far from releasing us, they obliged us to return to Louvain. On arriving at Bueken, they added to our number a great many people from neighbouring villages, and then we were made to return to Campenhout. At the lock in this village we were taken to the outposts and ordered to march in a band to Malines on pain of immediate death. We arrived at Malines towards 11.30 a.m. From thence I was directed towards Antwerp. All the country I went through was laid waste as far as the German outposts, the dwellings had been burnt and the cattle stolen ; numerous inhabitants had been killed, and all along the route we saw the bodies of unburied civilians. The cattle had been driven off by the soldiers. The officers told us that the bombardment of Louvain would continue, and I did indeed hear the noise of artillery fire in the direction of Louvain during the whole of Wednesday.

2. *Deposition of Mlle. X...., Resident of Louvain.*

On Wednesday the 19th, in the evening, just as I was leaving the military hospital wearing the armlet of the Red Cross, a German officer stopped me and threatened to have me shot, as well as a field-hospital priest who was with me. In a general way, the wounded, and especially the Belgians, were very badly treated in the German field-hospitals. The German soldiers desired to be nursed by Belgians. I noticed that some of the German wounded kept their weapons. Baron Orban de Xivry, President of the Red Cross, asked that they should be disarmed. His request was not granted.

During the night of August 19th–20th, eighty wounded arrived at Louvain, who had been brought away from the field-hospital at Lubbeck. The Germans had alleged that there had been firing from the hospital ; they threatened to shoot the wounded forthwith. On the protest of the German clerk they were sent to Louvain to be at the disposal of the Commandant. They had to make the journey on foot and were exposed to every possible kind of insult and threat on the part of the Germans who were conducting them. Many of them were ill-treated and struck. At Louvain they were kept imprisoned in the military hospital ; having been expelled on Thursday, the 27th, I was unable to learn their fate.

On Tuesday evening, March 25th, a shot was fired into the garden of the *Enfant-Jésus* field-hospital, in the *Rue des Joyeuses Entrées* ; no one was there but a German soldier ; immediately a fusillade broke out ; the machine-guns crackled. When the fire ceased, some officers made their way, revolver in hand, into the *Enfant-Jésus* field-hospital, saying that there had been firing from the hospital and that the doctors Ausloos and Aerts were to be shot. Mlle. Malcorps intervened, as well as the German wounded ; they succeeded in saving the lives of the doctors, but the latter were taken prisoner. In the streets the Germans were shooting at the men, women, and children who were fleeing.

I was assured that, even on Tuesday morning, German officers had advised Mme. Rومان, wife of the notary Rومان, to leave the town, as it was going to be destroyed.*

Mme. J... and other ladies of Louvain told me that on the 26th, while they were prisoners at the station, they witnessed a mock execution of Mgr. Coenraets, Vice-Rector of the University, and Père Schmit, of the order of the Dominicans. The priests blessed them, and after the Germans had fired, they forced these ladies to applaud.† M. Lenertz, architect of the University, was shot in front of his house on Tuesday evening, the 25th, while he was imploring mercy. The bodies of the civilians remained unburied. On the 27th as I went down the boulevard I saw the

* This is not an isolated fact. Dr. Ide, Professor of Medicine at the University of Louvain, reports that in the afternoon of August 25th he was in *Chaussée de Tirlemont*, at the house of M. Michotte, who was seriously ill. At 5 o'clock, Mme. Albert Michotte, daughter-in-law of M. Michotte, who lived in a villa adjoining her father-in-law's property, came to report the peculiar words of a German officer who was billeted with her. This man, on taking leave of her, had said : "Madame, I thank you for your kind welcome and I hope you will be spared, for it's going to begin now." At that moment everything was calm in this quarter. M. Ide adds that if Mme. Michotte had not repeated these words to him before the events of Louvain, he would doubtless not have believed them. (*Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry*).

† It appears from information supplied later that this fact is not correct. Mgr. Coenraets and *Father Parijs*, a Dominican, who had to parade the streets of the town and were subjected to all sorts of outrages, did not have to undergo the moral torture of a mock execution. This torture was inflicted, in every part of the country, on numerous Belgians, notably on a group of priests, driven from Louvain and numbering among them Mgr. van Cauwenbergh, second Vice-Rector of the University, and *Father Vermeersch*, of the Society of Jesus ; these people were marched, from August 27th–30th, 1914, for sixty-two hours, from Tervueren to Auderghem, Boitsfort, Linkebeek, Saint-Job, Uccle, Droogenbosch, Ruysbroeck, Hal and Brussels. (*Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry*).

corpse of M. Lenertz still lying there. When his wife and children were driven out of their house by the Germans, some of the members of the family had to stand in front of the corpse to hide it from Mme. Lenertz.

Baroness Ludovic Coppens, who was removed in a dying condition to the house of the priest of Kerkom, told me that she saw German military convoys laden with furniture and precious objects, from the looting at Louvain. The family of the notary Bosmans were torn from their house on August 29th. The father, mother and young children were made to lie down in the Place du Peuple and, doubtless in order to terrorise them, machine-guns were fired over their heads.

Mgr. de Becker, Rector of the American College, was transported to Brussels; he was only liberated through the intervention of the Minister of the United States.

3. *Deposition of M. Leon Dupriez, Professor of Law at the University of Louvain, Member of the Colonial Council, Member of the Royal Academy of Belgium.*

On Tuesday, August 25th, at about a quarter past eight, our children, aged 13½, 10, 9 and 6, were preparing to go to bed, when I heard shots which seemed to be coming near. I at once decided to make the whole family go down into the cellar for the night; I went at once to the cellar myself, to make beds for the children there. Meanwhile Madame Dupriez saw passing in front of the house, coming from the top of the Rue de Bruxelles and going towards the middle of the town, a troop of a dozen horses, saddled but riderless, galloping madly at breakneck speed.*

We passed the night of the 25th–26th in the cellar, hearing firing from time to time, but ignorant of all that was happening in the centre of the town. On Wednesday morning I learnt from neighbours only of the burning of the Halles and the Church of Saint-Pierre; but in the Saint-Jacques district, the burning in the Rue de la Station, and the neighbouring streets was not yet known. Towards 7.35, while Mme. Dupriez was in the garden with the children, I went up to the second storey of the house to fetch some clothing and heard the measured tread of a detachment of Germans passing the house. This detachment, as I learnt shortly after, must have numbered 75 to 100 men. Suddenly a shot rang out, followed immediately by tremendous shouts, and a volley of shots directed at my house; one bullet at least penetrated a window of the room I was about to enter. I hastened below to fetch the children and take them into the cellar. When I reached the porch of the house, I met my wife, who had already placed the children in safety. At the same moment violent blows from the butt-end of a rifle on the outer door and cries warned us of even graver danger. What was to be done? “Open at once,” I said, “it is our only chance of safety.” I hastened to open, but my wife preceded me, saying: “No, not you; I speak German better than you, and besides they are not likely to fire at a woman as quickly as at a man.” We opened the door together, but Madame Dupriez was before me in the aperture. Scarcely was the door twenty centimetres ajar, when Madame Dupriez had six rifles at her breast and a revolver under her nose. “*Um Gottes Willen, schiessen Sie doch nicht,*” she cried to them; “*wir haben nichts gethan.*” But in two seconds the door was violently pushed back. A little sergeant rushed forward crying: “*Hände hoch!*” searched me and threw on the ground with furious gestures everything that he found in my pocket—pocket book, purse, keys, etc. Then he pulled me into the street, and here, for four or five minutes, I was continuously assailed by one or two soldiers, white with passion, who held the barrel of their rifles thirty or forty centimetres from my chest, and shouted at me that I had fired on them. Meanwhile others, at first under the porch and then in the street, covered Mme. Dupriez with their rifles. Fortunately we both preserved the utmost calm, never ceasing to repeat, without shouting or gesticulating, that we had not fired, that we had handed over all our arms, that all the windows of the house were shut. Fortunately, too, we were able to give them these explanations in the German tongue, which Mme. Dupriez speaks very well and which I speak fairly fluently. At a certain moment, I saw that the soldier who was aiming at me was fingering the trigger of his rifle; then with a slow movement of my left hand, I pushed the rifle aside. The soldier furiously drew his sabre and gave me a heavy blow on the left arm, causing a bad bruise, which I felt for several months; then he covered me again while I slowly retired towards the door of the house. Then I saw that the two soldiers who until now had covered Mme. Dupriez had left her, to rejoin the main body of the detachment. But a tall sergeant—the same who had brandished the revolver at the moment we were opening the outer door and who seemed to be leading the whole attack, rushed towards the two soldiers, and called out to them some words I did not understand, persistently pointing

* M. Dupriez writes, in a letter addressed to the Chevalier Ernst de Bunswyck, Secretary to the Commission of Inquiry, that: “M. Charles de la Vallée-Poussin, Professor at the University, living in Rue de la Station, told him several times that the utmost calm reigned in that street when the Germans began to fire. He also saw, at about 10 or 15 minutes past eight, a troop of saddled and riderless horses dash past his house galloping wildly from the station towards the ‘Grand’ Place. This troop obviously could not have been the same as that which my wife saw pass our house at the same hour. My brother-in-law, Gustave Verriest, also saw a troop of the same sort at the same time, which was no doubt neither that of the Rue de la Station nor that of the Rue de Bruxelles. It might be interesting to prove that at the same moment three troops of German horses were driven from three different directions towards the centre of the town, in order to sow panic amongst the German soldiers. Notice that from eight o’clock no civilian was allowed in the streets and no person, as a fact, did walk about after the appointed hour.” M. Dupriez’ house is situated at the end of the Rue de Bruxelles.

to his boot ; the two soldiers returned towards Mme. Dupriez. We had thus come back in front of the door of the house, and we saw our four children, who had come out of the cellar, and were watching this terrible scene with eyes wide with terror. They were in one line in the middle of the porch, frightened but not excited, not shouting or crying, but saying in German, which they spoke perfectly, that we had not fired, and begging that we should not be killed. All of a sudden, the little sergeant cried in a terrible voice : "*Alle heraus !*" Then Mme. Dupriez and I, each seizing two children by the hand and followed by two servants, escaped as fast as we could, thinking they were going to shoot us in the back. After running like this for a hundred metres, we saw ahead of us, coming towards us, a second German detachment ; we rushed into the middle of the street, so that our aggressors could no longer fire on us without at the same time hitting the approaching troop.

We only escaped death thanks to a certain hesitation which manifested itself on the part of our aggressors, and this hesitation was no doubt due in the first place to the fact of our having opened the door immediately, then to our calmness and presence of mind, and finally and especially to the perfect knowledge of German which they noticed even in the children. We think that in the end they wondered whether by chance they had not attacked a German family. We were attacked by two sergeants and six or seven soldiers. The bulk of the detachment halted 100 metres from our house, near Judge Maes' door, and looked on passively at the whole scene. It may be asked why the officers in command of the detachment did not intervene, either to punish us if they thought us guilty, or to protect us in the contrary case.

Who fired the first shot which was the signal for the attack ? It was the tall sergeant with the revolver. I did not see him. But three weeks after this scene, I met at Brussels an inhabitant of Louvain who said to me : " I know who fired the bullet that nearly caused you to be shot ; I watched the detachment pass your house, from a distance ; I saw a tall sergeant fire into the air, then run shouting and showing his boot to the soldiers. Was this not obviously the same tall sergeant whom I also saw showing his boot to the men to summon them to the attack on Mme. Dupriez ? It must be noted that I had been the only one to notice this detail, and that, as I did not attach any importance to it up to that moment, I had not mentioned it to anyone. I regret not to be able to give the name of this witness, who is probably still in Belgium, under German domination. I have the most entire confidence in his sincerity and honesty. What proves to me beyond all question the truth of his account is the incident, which he could not have imagined, of the tall sergeant wishing to make his soldiers believe he had been struck on his boot, a gesture which I also saw with my own eyes repeated a few minutes later.

4. *Deposition of M. Ferdinand Giele, Engraver, Rue de la Station, Louvain.*

During the day of August 25th, an order was given to the inhabitants to open the doors of their houses from 8 o'clock onwards, to shut the windows, to light up the upper storeys, to raise the blinds and open the shutters.

We were at table in the dining room, when about 8.15 shots were fired rapidly in the street by German troopers coming from the station. The troop encamped in the Square replied and a motor car going towards the station had to stop suddenly in front of my house and back, while its occupants fired. In less than a second there was a frightful uproar of Browning and rifle shots. The fusillade was brisk, and even spread in the direction of the Boulevard de Diest. It became so violent that cannon-shots were fired. The encounter between the German troops continued up to the Grand' Place, where the machine-guns were fired at least twice. The fighting thus lasted with violence from 15 to 20 minutes ; later it continued for nearly an hour longer, but with less violence.

Was it a premeditated attack or a mishap ? The fact remains that it arose between Germans, and that no civilian was seen or fired.

Soon after, fires broke out on all sides.

I went to the street door to look ; no one ventured to go out, as the streets were guarded by the troops. A foot soldier signed to me to come. I went to warn the neighbours, who left their houses weeping, shouting, and holding up their hands. A group formed at the corner of the Rue de la Station. I advised calm, and addressing myself to an Uhlan officer who knew French, I parleyed with him. By agreement with him, I led this group of inhabitants to the police station, where they were placed in safety, after having to wait a quarter of an hour in front of the immense furnace. It was about midnight. I then returned to the Square and saw the progress of the fire, which was spreading to the Taverne Royale and the Berlitz School ; suddenly M. van Biesem told me that his mother had remained in the house. The officer allowed me to go and fetch her and to find out if the houses were all empty. A fresh fire broke out at this moment behind the Town Hall. It was in the market, at the side of the University Halles.

At this moment, realising no doubt that the limits had been passed, Major von Manteuffel came towards me, holding in his hand a paper requiring the police to go into the town and assemble the inhabitants to help the fire brigade. In the absence of the Commissary of Police, I assumed his duties under the direction of M. Schmit, alderman of the town. I busied myself in finding the pumps and fire-hose. Unfortunately we found no one who understood the working of the steam-pumps.

The fire continued to spread. Towards half-past five in the morning, I obtained an authorisation to direct towards the Rue de Bruxelles the inhabitants whom I had brought to the Police Station. I demanded soldiers to escort them. I left these people and sent away some more,

who were standing before the staircases of the Town Hall. I addressed the aide-de-camp of the general and asked him if these persons could go. The general replied "*Nein!*" in an arrogant tone. I begged these 250 persons to be patient for a while. I spoke a little later to M. Ibach, assistant secretary to the Staff, a most polite and obliging man, who gave me permission to let them go. It was then 6 o'clock. These people, led by the soldiers I had demanded, dispersed in the Rue de Tirlemont. I returned to speak to M. Ibach, who said to me that it was regrettable that civilians had fired. I protested against this insinuation; I asked him as I left him whether I could count on him in case of necessity. He held out his hand and replied that he would remain at my disposal, in front of the Town Hall. I next asked him for a pass. He made me come to Headquarters, where I was given the document I desired. I returned home.

In conclusion, I do not hesitate to say that the Germans killed one another; observe:

1. The doors of the houses had to remain open. Soldiers got into the houses and even fired from the roofs.

2. No body of a civilian was found in the neighbourhood of the fray. One dead and three wounded Germans were picked up.

The fires prove that the houses were to be destroyed; the marks of the bullets would have shown that the shooting was done with German cartridges.

That is my opinion, and I shall not change it.

The next day, about 1.30, a proclamation made by a policeman, a drummer, and some soldiers announced that the doors were to remain open and the windows to be shut. I went through the streets communicating these new orders. The inhabitants thanked me and obeyed. In the Rue Sainte-Anne shots were fired not far from me; I dared not go further; I took refuge with the inhabitants, who sheltered me until the next day, Thursday. On this day the rumour spread that the town was to be abandoned. I directed the exodus, calming the inhabitants and helping them as best I could.

On leaving Louvain I met at Tervueren some Jesuit Fathers being transported in carts, with an escort of German soldiers. On my arrival at Brussels on Friday morning, August 28th, I went to the United States Legation, where I communicated what I had seen at Louvain, and particularly reported the removal of the Jesuits. The Secretary told me that on the intervention of his Legation the Jesuits had been released in the vicinity of Hal.

My deposition was taken down in shorthand at the Legation.

5. *Deposition of Sister Henriette, of the Community of the Sisters of Mary at Wesemael; in the World, Marie-Louise Reynen.*

On Wednesday, August 19th, the Germans entered Wesemael. They went to the presbytery; the priest and his servant were in the garden; they fired on them both and killed the servant.

In the evening a German General demanded to be put up in the Convent. We gave him a good reception. He left next morning, leaving us a safe-conduct. Tears fell from his eyes in parting. At the same time, we heard him pronounce the word "*Aerschot.*" In the morning of the same day a German patrol set fire to 30 houses in the village, pretending the Belgians had fired. The Germans had taken food for the horses and men, and that without any form of requisition for it. On Friday the "*Death's Head*" Hussars passed; they entered the village and took wine and liqueurs. In the afternoon the Great General Staff arrived; it put up at the Convent and left on the following day. We were quiet until Tuesday. During that day the German wounded and a patrol that was at Wesemael manifested the greatest terror of an attack by the Belgians. In the evening they obliged us to hang out four Red Cross flags. The men of the village were shut up in the church, and the women and children of four households in a single house. The anxiety of the Germans being calmed, the inhabitants were allowed to return to their homes the same evening.

On Wednesday the fleeing inhabitants of Louvain told us that the town was on fire. Several German soldiers patrolling between Louvain and Wesemael told us that the German soldiers had fired at one another. A soldier of the German army, of Polish nationality, who was being treated by our field-hospital, told us, after seeing the German soldiers who were returning from Louvain: "*These drunken pigs fired.*"

On Thursday afternoon the women and children of Louvain, numbering 600 or 700, arrived at Wesemael. They were shut up in the boys' schools. Towards 4 p.m., the men of Wesemael and the environs were shut up in the church, the women and children of the village in the school together with the women and children of Louvain. It was abominable; there was a mother there with a two days' old infant. During the whole day the Germans looted all the houses, including the presbytery. The pillage was the result of a formal order, each soldier pillaging on his own account. A German soldier came and brought me 1 franc and 8 centimes, saying: "*For your poor, Sister; I have to pillage, but I am not a thief.*" A sergeant handed me a gold watch, a ring and a chain, begging me to convey them to Mlle. van Diest, the daughter of the doctor, from whose house these objects had been taken. The Germans set on fire the majority of the houses in Wesemael; they attempted to justify their conduct by saying that a big villager known by the name of "*Dikke Baas*" had cut off the head of a Hussar. This was false, as this man had left the village.

On Saturday they went away, taking with them all the male population, led by the priest, curate, and burgomaster; we do not know where they were sent; in any case, these people did not return. On Saturday the German wounded had to leave the village; they were transported to Louvain.

6. *Deposition of M. A. Van Hecke, Professor at the Faculty of Science, of the University of Louvain.*

On Tuesday, August 25th, at about 5 o'clock, I returned home from the Léon XIII Hospital ; I live at the Porte de Tirlemont.

I saw the soldiers leaving the town in great haste.

Towards 7 o'clock, as I was going out with my wife, we were stopped by a score of soldiers stationed at the Porte de Tirlemont. One of them said to me in German : " We want to go to the Town Hall to find our commanding officer ; we have not joined the rest of our troops this afternoon and we must report our presence, at all costs." I showed them the way and exchanged a few words with them.

A military automobile, coming from the Chaussée de Tirlemont, stopped for a moment, the driver spoke to one of the German soldiers, and the motor went on again at full speed by the Boulevard de Tirlemont. It passed another, which had come from the station, halted half-way up the Rue de Tirlemont, *let off some luminous signals, and disappeared.*

Suddenly a fusillade burst out around us, from the direction of the Rue de Tirlemont. My wife had her skirt pierced by a bullet. We rushed down a side street—Rue de la Plaine—where we found shelter in a cellar. The fusillade had diminished in violence, so we risked going out at about 10 o'clock at night, and we met an employee at Peeters', the bookseller's, who invited us to spend the night at his house, where I kept watch.

The employee told me he had seen some Germans, at 6 o'clock, pursued by some Belgian soldiers, nearly as far as the Porte de Diest. The streets were so obstructed that he took an hour getting home. I made this man repeat his tale as many as ten times.

From his window we saw the Chaussée de Tirlemont in flames, and numerous fires in the interior of the town. From the house forming the angle of the Chaussée and the Boulevard de Tirlemont, luminous rockets were seen shooting up from the midst of the furnace, which made us think this was a fire-signal. On the following night, indeed, we were able to make the same observation with regard to some premises almost adjoining.

On returning to my home at about 5 o'clock in the morning, I found my house riddled with bullets. On the way, I found a dead woman and a wounded girl of fourteen, whom they carried away. Towards 8 o'clock, I heard a ring. My neighbour, M. Kleintjens, came and told me that his son and grandson had been arrested at their house, in the night, and that it was only due to the supplications of the mother that the child was not taken away. In great anxiety about his son, M. Kleintjens besought me to solicit the intervention of the Rector on his behalf.

Towards 10 o'clock my draughtsman came and joined me. He had been stopped on the way by German soldiers. He told me that the Rue de la Station was almost completely burnt down. The German soldiers had stopped him in the Grand' Place and forced him to conduct them to a seller of field-glasses. He took them to the Rue de Namur, then to the Rue de Diest ; but as the shops had been burnt, the soldiers in anger had beaten him unmercifully.

At 4 o'clock in the afternoon the German troops obliged us to leave our house.

The Vice-Rector of the University and the Prior of the Dominicans were led through the town by German soldiers, preceded by two drummers, to inform the populace that at the first shot fired by a civilian they would instantly be shot. The terrified inhabitants had to listen to this proclamation with arms raised.

In the evening we gathered together at our house some of the families whose houses had been burned and who were trying to flee to the country by creeping from garden to garden, climbing the walls.

They found shelter with us ; we passed the night in the cellar ; the women and children shared the mattresses. The men kept a look-out in the cellars, the gardens, and the stables. At dawn, all started on their way. For my part, I went in search of some food. I managed to reach the Rue de la Plaine by the stables.

At the sight of my Red Cross armlet some peasants implored me to give succour to a man lying with his leg broken. Scarcely had I returned home when I sent off my draughtsman to the Institute Léon XIII Hospital in the Rue de Tirlemont.

Mgr. Deploige informed me that he would do his very utmost to move this man. He charged me to take refuge myself at the Hospital, and insisted on the necessity for collecting everything that I possessed in the way of eatables, which he would endeavour to have fetched by a hand barrow. With all speed I hastened with my wife to the hospital in the Rue de Tirlemont ; motors passed bearing officers, who pointed their weapons at us.

At the field-hospital Léon XIII we found over two hundred persons. A German officer announced that he had orders to bombard the town at mid-day punctually, that the patients must be carried into the cellars, and that the able-bodied inhabitants would be in safety at the station.

A German soldier, bought over with gold, advised us not to go to the station, but bade us escape. We found at the Porte de Tirlemont an enormous crowd of unfortunates, who, having found no room at the station, were fleeing in confusion towards Tirlemont. A group of horsemen barred the way back.

I resolved to return home. Two of my colleagues followed me. We sought shelter in the stable at the bottom of the garden. As a protection against bombardment we emptied the liquid manure pit in order to put the children down in it. Time passed ; it was nearly mid-day. Cannon were placed on the exterior boulevard, and then removed a little later. We passed the

afternoon and night in the stables—a night of conflagrations! On Friday morning, at about 9 o'clock, we ventured to escape towards Brussels.

I returned later to Louvain and found that my house had been methodically looted.

7. *Deposition of M. Felix Van Aerschot, Manufacturer, aged 44, Inhabitant of Louvain.*

The Germans entered Louvain on August 19th. From the moment they entered the town they requisitioned food and billets for their troops; they broke the doors of the uninhabited houses and looted them, giving themselves up to all kinds of excesses; they went to the private banks, the National Bank of Belgium, the Banque de la Dyle, the Popular Bank, and had the cash handed over to them. They took hostages, notably M. Colins, the Burgomaster, Senator Van der Kelen, and M. Schmit, alderman of the town. They released them on the following day, then took others—M. de Fauteur, justice of the peace, and M. Hermann-Ausloos, deputy-senator; and the next day, the 21st, they added to these the senior priest of the town, and Mgr. Coenraets, Vice-Rector of the University. With the exception of these events, calm reigned in the town until Tuesday evening, August 25th, the second day of the battle of Malines. On this day I had to billet nine soldiers and one captain in command. Towards 7 o'clock, someone came to announce that the enemy was at the gates of the town. At once the German soldiers equipped themselves and prepared to leave. Several wept; we consoled them and gave them something to eat and drink. On the stroke of 8 o'clock shots were heard from the direction of the Place du Peuple, where the German cavalry was assembled. A part of the transport, which was in the Rue Léopold, made a half turn and went off, charging down upon the station. I was on my doorstep and heard the whistle of the bullets that were being fired from the Place du Peuple. From this moment a sustained fusillade broke out and cavalry charges succeeded one another in the direction of the station, where they must have met the German troops driven out of Malines by the Belgian army. At this moment a formidable cannonade began; we heard the crackling of machine-guns and saw the shrapnel falling in the centre of the town. We took shelter in the cellar of my house. The fusillade and bombardment ceased towards 10 o'clock. At this time several houses had suffered from the effects of the bombardment. When the bombardment ceased, the Germans began to burn the town; the German soldiers broke into the houses and set fire to them. This lasted all night.

On Wednesday morning, August 26th, I left my residence, which was about to be caught by the flames, together with my wife, child, mother, father-in-law and a cousin. The Rue Léopold, where I live, was already partly consumed by fire. We arrived at the Rue de la Station, at the house of Baron Orban de Xivry, who persuaded us to flee with his family and some members of the Red Cross. At this moment a German officer told him that the whole town was to be destroyed. We went out in a party and noticed that the Rue de la Station was entirely ablaze. The Town Hall was intact. But the University Halls, where the University Library was kept, must have been burnt down during the night. The Church of Saint-Pierre, the Collegiate Church of Louvain, had been set on fire, according to what I was told by eye-witnesses. The blaze was so fierce that when we found ourselves in the middle of the Rue de la Station we had to run at certain moments in order not to be burnt alive.

On leaving Baron Orban de Xivry's house, we found a German officer, who divided our party into two groups. Baron Orban de Xivry's family and the members of the Red Cross were sent direct by the Rue de la Station; the second group, comprising my family, was conducted to the station by the Rue Marie-Thérèse. In the Place de la Station, where all the houses were on fire, we smelt the foetid odour of burning flesh. After a parley we were grouped in the Square. Ten or fifteen corpses of civilians were lying on the ground. We were the sport of the German troops. The men were separated from their wives and children, and even prevented from bidding them farewell. Baron Orban de Xivry's group was sent in the direction of Germany by train.

The women, separated from their husbands, were assembled in front of the tramway shelter. They seemed to be at liberty. As for the men, they were driven by force before troops of infantry. They were searched; several were stripped of all they possessed. We were conducted to Mont-César, half-an-hour's journey, and then to Hérent, a neighbouring village in the direction of Malines. We remained in the open country a couple of hours. We heard firing, and bullets whistled in our ears. The order was given to make us lie down. Towards 3 o'clock in the afternoon, after having for our sole nourishment a bit of black bread and a little rice, we were taken along the Chaussée de Malines, half-way from Campenhout. On our way, all the houses along the Chaussée were burning. We even had to race along in certain villages in order not to be burnt alive. At the doors of the houses half-charred corpses strewed the ground. We made a good hour's halt at Campenhout. The German soldiers tied our hands behind our backs, saying they were going to shoot us. There were 74 of us. We remained thus for three-quarters of an hour lying in a trench, one platoon of soldiers in front of us and another behind us. At this moment there was an alarm, and we had to set out again towards Campenhout. All along the route we saw nothing but burnt farms, and cattle wandering in the fields. We reached Campenhout, which was intact, at about 7 o'clock in the evening. Immediately the church was invaded by German soldiers. We were shut up in it and spent the night there. Among our number were two priests, one an American, the other a Spaniard, who had to submit to the same harsh treatment as ourselves. At about 4.30 in the morning of the next day a German officer ironically invited those of us who wished to make their confession to do so, adding that we were going

to be shot in half-an-hour. At that time the Spanish and the American priests were still with us.

Towards 5 o'clock in the morning they came and informed us that the Louvain prisoners were free, and they gave us a pass for Louvain. From now onwards the two priests were separated from us. I do not know what became of them, but possibly they went to the presbytery. When we were a few kilometres from Louvain we met a German brigade, whose leader seized our pass and took us prisoner once more. In answer to a question of one of our number, we were told that we were being taken towards the forts of Antwerp, to be given a taste of the Belgian grapeshot. We were put in front of the troops and marched towards Malines. During the whole journey we were overwhelmed with insults, beaten with sticks, spat on and threatened with death. On re-entering Campenhout, the Brigadier-General who had given us our pass in the morning came to meet us. We asked him to set us at liberty, and it was at this moment that they released us, on condition that we remained in a group until the last German outpost before Malines. Various parties had joined ours on the way.

A woman belonging to one of these groups gave birth to a child on the journey.

8. *Report, dated August 31st, 1914, of M. René Staes, Engineer, confirmed by M. Charles Jacmart, retired Major of Artillery, and by the retired Colonel de Neuchatel.*

On Tuesday, August 25th, about 4 o'clock, being in the service of the Red Cross at the military hospital of Louvain, a German military doctor came and asked me to warn the other field hospitals to hold themselves in readiness to receive a large number of wounded, as an action was in progress in the vicinity of Louvain. In delivering this message I was able to find out that the alarm had been given throughout the town, and that the German troops were leaving their cantonments in great haste. However, the police guard, composed of 21 men, who had been installed in the convent of the Pères Pie, 119, Rue de la Station, as well as several men billeted in the same street (5 with Count Van der Stegen, 8 with Mlle. Geysbrecht, etc.), remained at their posts. The cannon thundered in the suburbs and the noise of machine-guns and rifles was distinctly heard. The glow of a fire was seen in the direction of Hérent. Towards 8 o'clock horses and wagons galloped through the Rue de la Station. Several wagons were overturned. A lively fusillade broke out at this moment in the street. I took shelter in the cellar with my mother and the servants. Some minutes later fires broke out in the direction of Rue de Tirlemont and the Saint Martin barracks. Towards 10 o'clock the Place de la Station and several houses in the Rue de la Station caught fire. Explosions revived the fires that had been caused by bombs thrown into the dwellings by the soldiers (a fact seen personally by Colonel de Neuchatel in the case of the houses opposite his). The whole was accompanied by a very steady fusillade on the houses and on those inhabitants who attempted to leave their blazing houses (a fact witnessed by M. Jacmart and myself in Rue de la Station and Rue de la Cuiller). The inhabitants climbed over the garden walls to escape the flames and find shelter. I noted that there were over thirty persons in the stables of M. Jacmart, where we were taking refuge.

Meanwhile the fires in the Rue de la Station were spreading and we were obliged to cover ourselves with wet woollen blankets in order to protect ourselves from the sparks.

This state of affairs lasted all night. At every moment fires broke out in fresh centres, accompanied by explosions. Towards 9 o'clock in the morning matters calmed down; we profited by this fact to venture into the street. A German soldier carrying a silver pyx and numerous boxes of cigars told us that we should go to the station, where trains were ready to receive us. When we reached the Place de la Station we saw in the square seven or eight corpses of murdered civilians. Not a single house in the square was in existence. The whole row of houses behind the station, in the Blauwput, was burnt down.

After much parleying with extremely coarse officers, who insulted us, we were brutally separated—I from my mother, and M. Jacmart and his two eldest sons from his wife and two youngest children—by an officer who threatened us with his revolver. My servant, Maurice Ghémar, who was carrying my valise and his own, was obliged to give them up to some officers. He was searched, and they found on him some bills, money, and a savings-bank book for the total sum of 7,805 francs. Everything was taken from him and the officer gave him a receipt for 7,700 francs, signed: "von Frischow," which receipt I hold at your disposal. We were then divided between different units of troops, who took the direction of Hérent. We were made to march past my mother and Mme. Jacmart and other women of the village, who were gathered together at the tram shelter. These women held out their arms to us in tears; but we could not go to them. From this moment we were constantly exposed to ill-treatment and ignominy of every kind on the part of the soldiers, and especially the officers. There were 77 of us in their power, including Colonel de Neuchatel, M. Jacmart and his two sons, M. van Aerschot, manufacturer, M. Deneef, chemist, M. Michaux, retired commissary, and his three sons, Père Coloboet and another priest (a Spaniard), M. de Clerck, employed in the district commissariat, M. Auguste Dubois, Pierre Van de Bosch, a servant of Colonel de Neuchatel, Maurice Ghémar, my servant, M. Busschots, dentist, and his son, etc. . . . The officers and soldiers told us that we were prisoners because the civil population had fired on their troops.

M. Jacmart was sent a quarter of an hour in advance to warn the populations that if a shot were fired by them we should all be shot. We went through the village of Hérent, which was on fire to such an extent that we had to hasten our steps in order not to be asphyxiated and caught by the flames in the middle of the highway. Charred corpses lay in front of the houses.

We were conducted thus into a field beyond the village, where the troops had some soup. It was then between 12 and 1 o'clock. During our halt the soldiers stole the straying cattle and killed them. A fusillade burst out on our left. We were told at this moment that it was civilians firing, and that we were going to be shot. A few minutes later, the march continued towards Malines. We were insulted and threatened everywhere by the detachments of troops we met. We were called bands of pigs (*Schweinebande*), traitors, assassins, etc., even more by the officers than the soldiers.

All alleged, as if by order, that civilians had fired on the troops, that 3,000 rifles had been found in a church in Louvain, and that shots had been fired at the Germans from a Red Cross hospital. We were then led into another field, where the troops rested. Our hands were bound behind our backs with our handkerchiefs. M. Jacmart, who had not understood what he was told to do, was obliged to kneel down, covered by an officer's revolver. We then had to follow the flag, encircled by a company which, we were told, was the company that would carry out the executions. We filed along thus as far as Campenhout, in the midst of troops who were stationed all along the high road, and who insulted and threatened us continuously, saying that we should be shot. Under these conditions, we arrived towards 7 o'clock at Campenhout, where we were shut up in the church with the whole male population of the village. Some priests had joined us. A few compassionate soldiers offered us some water to drink and gave us a piece of bread, but no officer saw to our food. We passed the night on chairs, fetched by a picket of infantry. Towards 5 o'clock in the morning a list was drawn up of the 77 inhabitants of Louvain, and we were given a safe-conduct to return to Louvain; but hardly had we started when we were stopped and led to the Brigadier-General. He gave us in charge of some other soldiers, who were told to escort us to the next post. During this march a military butcher struck me violently on the back with the flat of his knife. M. Jacmart received a blow on the back with a shovel. On arriving at the post we were received with unspeakable brutality by two officers, who accused us of being soldiers dressed as civilians. When I pointed out to him that we had among us two pensioned officers and that the son of one of them was fighting in the Belgian army, he replied that they were all three pigs like me. We were then told we could not go on towards Louvain, and that we were going to be taken to Antwerp, because Louvain was about to be razed to the ground. We retraced our steps, still escorted by a group of soldiers. Men, women and children collected in different villages were added to us. We formed a group of 200 persons. We were led as far as the outposts. Then they left us to our fate, saying we were to reach Malines as soon as possible and remain in a group, otherwise the scattered persons would be fired at. Four hours after our arrival at Malines, the bombarding of the town began! During the whole time we were detained we had as nourishment only a crust of bread and some water, which were given us by some kind-hearted soldiers. Our march was frequently very rapid, although we had among us elderly men, such as M. Michaux, the commissary, a man of 75 years.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEPOSITION OF COLONEL DE NEUCHATEL.

My house being burnt, I fled like the others by the neighbouring gardens and reached the Rue Juste-Lipse. I was told that the men were to go to the Town Hall. I went, but from there we were sent back to the Station. On the way, I was able to see that the Church of Saint-Pierre was burnt, also the left-hand corner of the Rue de la Station and the Place Marguérite. The shop windows were broken, also the doors, and I saw some shops being looted.

P.S.—I desire to point out that M. David Fischbach had put up at his house a General and his aides-de-camp. The General, in gratitude for the welcome he had received, had given M. Léon David a pass permitting him to travel throughout the whole of Belgium, and a certificate declaring that his person and property were to be respected. In spite of this, the Germans accused M. David of having caused or allowed people to shoot from his windows at them, and for this reason they assassinated him and burnt his house. Colonel de Neuchatel received several officers in his house, who left him a certificate gratefully acknowledging his reception of them. He places it at your disposal. We can affirm that the authorities of Louvain in the first place, and afterwards the Germans, received a large quantity of arms of all kinds—revolvers, rifles, trophies, foils, swords, etc.—and we refuse to believe that a single weapon was left in the Rue de la Station.

9. *Deposition of Madame Hubertine Van Kempen, wife of Major Stijns, of the Gendarmerie garrisoned at Louvain.*

On the evening of August 19th three German officers demanded to be taken in at my house; they went away next day. A week after, about 8 o'clock, I heard a veritable bombardment. About 10 o'clock the fusillade ceased. I went upstairs to put the children to bed. I discovered that the town was on fire. About 5 o'clock in the morning I climbed the wall of my neighbour, M. Helleputte, in the Boulevard de Diest, and there breakfasted. Towards 8 o'clock in the morning I went to the station to try to go away. I was prevented and forced to wait in the square in front of the station, where there were some fifty women. We had to stand facing the square, by the statue of Van de Weyer, until 11 o'clock at night without food; it was raining. During the day in the square and in the Boulevard de Tirlemont, opposite the warehouse, I saw about twenty or twenty-five civilians, and some priests or monks shot. The victims were bound in fours and placed on the pavement of M. Hamaide's house. The soldiers who were firing were on the

other side of the Boulevard, on the roof of the warehouse. Soldiers were firing, besides, in all directions from all over the place. Towards midnight we were allowed to enter the station and were put into cattle-trucks. Next day we were allowed to return home. Scarcely had we got back when we were told that everyone was to leave the town. We were assembled in the Place de la Gare, to the number of several hundreds, men, women and children, escorted by German soldiers, and we were taken to Tirlemont. At Tirlemont they demanded a passport, to be obtained from the Burgomaster of Cumplich. We went there. Then we returned to Tirlemont, where we were liberated. I went to stay with some people. After some days I returned to my home at Louvain. I found my house completely ransacked, the beds dirtied, nothing left at all. The dregs of the Louvain populace helped in the looting, moreover. It was the same in all the houses. A German officer forced me to take him and his men to the cellar and show him what wine I had left.

The town was still burning. All along the streets were numbers of unburied corpses. I then returned to Tirlemont.

10. *Deposition of M. X——, Manufacturer, Inhabitant of Louvain.*

At the beginning of the German occupation I noticed nothing abnormal at Louvain except the houses abandoned by their owners. Many of these houses were pillaged.

On the day previous to August 25th some officers billeted on M. Rooman, the notary, where they had been well received, told Mme. Rooman, so I am assured, that it was necessary to leave the town, as terrible things were about to take place.

On August 25th, after supper, we heard a lively fusillade. Bullets were striking my father's house, which was situated in the Boulevard de Tirlemont. The shots were coming from the other side of the railway, where the German field-ovens were situated. Then shots rang out from all sides. We went down into the cellar of the factory. We stayed there all night. At about 5.30 a.m. I noticed that the Germans were setting fire to the house of Mlle. Gréban de Saint-Germain, which adjoins my father's residence. Soon afterwards we heard the smashing of doors and windows in the houses of my father and brother and the neighbouring houses as far as the residence of Baron Coppens.

We took refuge with neighbours in the Rue Joseph II. On discovering that the fire was slowly spreading to the factory, we went there and succeeded in extinguishing the flames, thanks to the help of a score of workmen. Just as we were pouring water on the débris a German patrol caught sight of us and fired at us. We fled. After our departure the factory was entirely ransacked. Seven million cigars disappeared.

On Wednesday morning the Germans, preceded by Mgr. Coenraets and the Superior of the Dominicans, assembled the population to the sound of the drum. They read aloud three proclamations.

The first announced that Mgr. Coenraets and the Superior of the Dominicans had been taken as hostages, and that they would be shot if there were any hostile demonstrations against the Germans.

The second commanded that all doors should be left open and windows lighted up.

The third called out the Civic Guard.

We left Louvain about 1 o'clock for our country house at Blanden.

In the afternoon the exodus of the population began.

On Thursday Louvain was completely empty.

During this time pillaging took place and systematic burning went on.

Our factory was burnt on Friday. Thanks, however, to the intervention of the Governor of the prison, who feared that the fire might spread to his establishment, the Germans extinguished the flames, using materials which caused immediate extinction.

I returned to Louvain on September 5th. As I crossed the Rue de la Station I saw that the Germans were looting the house of M. Louis Bosmans. The booty was piled on carts.

I observed that the town had suffered terribly: the rich quarters were burnt down. The whole of the higher part of the town, even where the houses were not burnt, was pillaged or systematically ravaged.

I was assured that the German soldiers declared that shots had been fired from my father's residence.

That is entirely false. On Friday, August 21st, after a proclamation from the German authorities, we had handed over all our arms at the Town Hall.

Possibly, however, the Germans mistook for shots the explosion of some chemical products which were in the State Laboratory adjoining the factory.

About the same time the hairdresser who lives in the Rue de Bruxelles drew up a report, which he delivered to Alderman Schmit, and which I read. It is there stated that on Wednesday, August 26th, at 1.30, this hairdresser saw going down the Rue de Bruxelles a company of German infantry, which was fired at by a German troop posted at the Town Hall.

A member of the Laboubée family, living in the Rue de Bruxelles, told me that on Tuesday, August 25th, in the afternoon, seven or eight German soldiers were taking refreshment; on hearing a troop of Germans led by some officers come up, they asked leave to escape by an exit, where they would not be observed. This they did. At this moment an officer entered, and

without any pretext killed Laboubée and his daughter with a revolver. The corpses were covered up with blankets. The next day the corpses were still there, but the blankets had been removed.

After the battle of Louvain, on September 9th, as I could no longer go to the factory, I left the town for good.

When I left about two hundred inhabitants had already been extricated from the ruins. Every day some were found in the cellars : in one house, in particular, in the Chaussée de Tirlemont (the cheesemonger's situated at the side of the road), the father, mother and children were found suffocated.

11. *Deposition of M. X—, Manager of a commercial establishment at Louvain.*

The Germans entered Louvain on August 19th at about 2 o'clock, after engaging in a battle between Corbeek-Loo and Louvain, which battle continued as far as the Porte de Tirlemont. Beyond the burning of several houses in the Chaussée de Tirlemont, the town did not suffer that day.

During the first days of the occupation the German troops contented themselves with requisitioning supplies and demanding the billeting of the soldiers on the inhabitants. They behaved fairly well in the inhabited houses, but the majority of the deserted houses were broken into, and the temporary occupants conducted themselves shamefully, looting and destroying everything that they could not carry off, even to the pitch of breaking the marble chimney-pieces (in the house of Dr. van Gehuchten, Professor at the University, in the Rue Léopold).

On Tuesday, August 25th, artillery was heard in the direction of Hérent, and numerous houses were seen burning in this district. This continued until nearly 1 o'clock ; the Germans were said to be in conflict with the Belgians and English, who had come out from Antwerp. About 8 o'clock in the evening a sudden and sharp fusillade was heard, accompanied by the crackling of machine-guns. It is impossible for me to say exactly from whence it was coming, but to judge from the damage done by the bullets to my house, the shots must have been fired from very near.

On hearing the shots our first thought was to take shelter in the cellar, where we passed a sleepless night, expecting every moment to see our house invaded. Towards morning calm seemed to be restored and I went out into the garden to see what was happening ; the spectacle was terrifying : the large premises belonging to MM. van der Elst Brothers (three houses), situated a hundred metres from my house, were on fire. Towards the centre of the town and towards the station nothing but smoke and flames was to be seen. I learned later that during the night incendiary fires had been lighted in the Palais de Justice, the Church of Saint-Pierre, the University Halles, and many of the neighbouring houses. At this sight my first care was to place my family in comparative safety in a large garden behind my house. We remained there with some neighbours during the whole of Wednesday and Wednesday night until Thursday, our only shelter a small shed, which afforded us little protection against the rain. Several times during the day of Wednesday German soldiers came to the neighbouring gardens and took away the able-bodied men ; some were released in the evening, others sent to Germany, and others still had to act as a screen for the German troops going to fight in the direction of Hérent.

Meanwhile, the burning and pillaging continued ; those who tried to fight the flames were fired at (this was the case at Van der Elst Brothers'). Those unfortunate persons, who were unable to flee from their homes by their gardens, and attempted to go out by the street, were shot. On the Boulevard de Tirlemont I counted seven or eight corpses, one of an old man, another of a child. These bodies remained nearly a week without burial, beside the carcasses of dead horses.

On Thursday, August 27th, the Germans caused it to be announced that everyone was to assemble at the station. After some hesitation we went, passing in front of a line of soldiers, who were ready to fire on those who did not hold their arms up.

At the station an officer told us that the town was going to be bombarded because civilians had fired on the soldiers and had killed four hundred. I do not know how much truth there was in this story, but it is difficult to believe it. Another version, which seems to me more plausible, is that on Tuesday evening a French motor machine-gun went through the town* and threw the German troops into a panic ; the soldiers lost their heads and killed one another. Naturally, I was unable to verify this story.

In the Place de la Gare the spectacle was terrifying ; not a house remained standing, the fire was spreading gradually up the Rue de la Station and the Rue de Diest, and towards the centre of the town thick columns of smoke were seen. Some days later many corpses were found in the cellars of these houses. The wretched people had taken refuge there to escape the fusillade and were suffocated by the conflagration.

After being left for half an hour at the station in the mud, we were ordered to go along the Chaussée de Tirlemont, and to hasten as fast as possible towards Tirlemont, for the bombardment was about to begin.

Then began the long and painful journey towards Tirlemont ; a column estimated at between eight thousand and ten thousand persons spread along the road ; a large part of it consisted of women, children, and old men, each carrying what clothing they had been able to save.

* This is an entirely imaginary supposition. [Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.]

A large number of the houses situated between Louvain and Tirlemont had been burnt down ; the inhabitants of those which had been spared offered us all that they still had—that is to say water—but it was impossible to find eatables. It was forbidden to halt for a rest or to quit the high road ; the soldiers who accompanied us drove on those who wished to stop ; it was pitiable to see the children and old men dragging themselves along in the rain. We were able with some friends to reach the head of the column and to arrive, at about 2.30, at the foot of the ascent to Cumplich. There we were stopped by a German post. Fortunately, I had on me a German passport, and after a long parley with the officer in command I succeeded in getting my family through, as well as some people who were with us. We were led between soldiers to the Town Hall of Tirlemont, where, after further parleying, we were finally permitted to seek a lodging in the town. The rest of the column had to remain outside Tirlemont for several hours ; towards evening they were admitted and lodged anywhere among the inhabitants or in the schools and churches. The inhabitants of Tirlemont were admirable, and did all that they could to succour the unfortunate refugees of Louvain. The situation was, however, critical at Tirlemont on account of the lack of flour.

On the following Saturday I came to Wygmael with two carts, accompanied by two German soldiers, to fetch flour from the Remy Mills for the revictualling of Tirlemont.

On my way past Louvain I was able to observe that the work of destruction was systematically going on. The Place de la Gare was transformed into a huge depository, which was full of wine bottles ; officers and soldiers were eating and drinking in the midst of the ruins without appearing to be in the least inconvenienced by the horrible odour of the corpses which were still on the boulevard. In the Boulevard de Diest I saw some soldiers of the Landsturm taking away whatever they chose from the houses and then lighting incendiary fires, and all this under the very eyes of the officers.

In returning from Wygmael I wished to go through the town to see what was happening there, but a sentry prevented us from doing so, saying that we should certainly be killed by the civilians who were in the houses. Later some soldiers said to us again : “ Is it not a pity to be obliged to destroy such a beautiful town ? It is the fault of the inhabitants, who fired on our soldiers.” It was a lesson which they had been taught, and it was repeated to me several times, even by soldiers to whom I had made no mention of the destruction of Louvain : this shows their desire to justify themselves, and absolve themselves from the abominable act which had been committed.

12. *Deposition of M. Cyrille Van Impe, in religion Frère Rudolphe of the Écoles Chrétiennes, Resident of Molenbeek-Saint-Jean.*

I belonged to the Belgian Red Cross. On August 19th there were three of us hospital-attendants at Lovenjoul ; the Germans tore our armlets from us and threw them on the dung heap. We fled. We were arrested, struck and insulted. Then they released us. We returned to Louvain, bringing with us a wounded Belgian. I had to set him down seven times because the German machine-guns were firing on us. I was struck by a bullet in the thigh. On Tuesday, August 25th, about 4 o'clock, a large number of German troops, which took three hours to defile, passed down the Rue des Joyeuses Entrées and the Rue de Bruxelles. I was in No. 25 in the Rue des Joyeuses Entrées, when about 8 o'clock I heard a revolver shot. At this moment there was a light showing through the ventilator of No. 27, Rue des Joyeuses Entrées. Immediately some German troops, who were in the Rue Marie-Thérèse, fired in the direction of the ventilator of this house. Immediately after, the German force, which had defiled towards the Rue de Bruxelles, returned towards the Rue des Joyeuses Entrées, thinking that they were encountering the enemy there. A conflict arose between the German troops, which lasted nearly three hours. At 11 o'clock at night I observed about sixty German corpses lying in the street.*

The next day the town was burning. On Thursday, the 27th, we fled. There were thirteen of us—priests and monks, among them being the former priest of Saint Joseph, over seventy years of age ; M. Noël, Professor at the University, the present priest of Saint Joseph ; and the Rector of the Fathers of Scheut. We were arrested at Lovenjoul by a troop of a thousand Germans. I think they were gunners. We were conducted near to a farm, where there were fifteen German officers. I was taken into the room where they were. I heard the discussion which took place between them as to what fate the ecclesiastics of Louvain should be made to suffer. With the exception of one man, all wished them to be shot. One alone demanded what authority they could find for such an action. The others confined themselves to replying that there was no reason for liberating the ecclesiastics, seeing that they were responsible for what had taken place at Louvain. Then they pushed me into a pigsty, from which a pig had just been driven out under my very eyes. The Germans placed in front of the pigsty a packing case, which was used as a table. In the pigsty I was forced to undress completely. The German soldiers examined my clothing and took away everything which I possessed. Meanwhile the other ecclesiastics were brought to the pigsty ; two of them were undressed, as I was ; all were searched and despoiled of all they had. The German soldiers kept everything of value—watches, silver, small change—and only gave us back things of no account. Our breviaries were thrown on the dung heap. Certain of the ecclesiastics were despoiled of considerable sums ; one of them had 6,000 francs, another over 4,000. All were bullied and struck.

* Doubtless deceived by the darkness, the witness probably mistook for corpses some haversacks and equipment abandoned in the street. [Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.]

At the intervention of Mme. Noël, mother of Professor Noël, the German officer who had previously taken our part had us finally released.

When we left Louvain there was no resistance in the town. I saw no civilians who had fired. I could never admit the possibility that terrified and unarmed civilians would dream of doing so.

13. *Report of M. Gustave Verriest, Professor at Louvain University.*

I, the undersigned, Gustave Verriest, Professor at the Faculty of Science of Louvain University am prepared to swear to the following declaration :—

In the afternoon of August 25th two German officers presented themselves separately at my parents' house, 40 Rue du Canal, where I was living alone. One, a very gay young officer, put nothing in his room but a large bottle of cognac. I did not see him again. The other, who announced himself as the Oberarzt Porst (I write this name phonetically as I heard it) of a regiment of Hussars, whose number I have forgotten, was a sensible and perfectly well-behaved man. I took him to supper with my sister, who lived in the Rue de Bruxelles.

On returning by the Rue de la Lei about 8.15 (Belgian time) we heard several shots, which seemed to us to come from the Rue de Bruxelles. On reaching the Fishmarket, near the Rue Charles-de-Lorraine, it seemed to us that shots were fired from the Rue de Malines (the Mont-César side.) At the same time two horses galloped across the Fishmarket up the Rue de Malines towards the Grand' Place. The growing darkness prevented us from seeing whether they had riders.

Before coming into my house the officer assured me he had to go for a moment to the Saint-Martin Barracks. I had scarcely gone in when a violent fusillade broke out in the Rue Vital-Decoster. This street is only separated from my house by some gardens. I took refuge in the cellar, thinking that a battle was about to take place between the Belgian and the German troops. Now and then came long periods of silence, at other times isolated shots were fired at regular intervals of four or five seconds.

I think it was about 10.30 when my door bell rang. I opened a window on the first storey, and a score of soldiers pointed their weapons at me, while the Oberarzt Porst informed me that he had come to fetch his baggage. While he collected his baggage he told me that some citizens had fired from the top of two houses forming the angles opposite the barracks' door. He was the officer of highest rank in the barracks at the moment of the attack. He was unable, in spite of his efforts (he insists on this point), to prevent the soldiers from setting fire to these houses; both sides of the Rue du Manège were now burning. I asked him if he could give me an escort to take me to my sister's house. He promised to take me himself after reporting himself to his superior officer. I accompanied him to the Saint-Martin Barracks. On the way he told me that the soldiers had caught three *francs-tireurs*, and one of them had been killed. "He is lying there on the other pavement," he said, as we entered the Rue du Manège.

I was unable to see him then, as the street was filled with soldiers. I saw him next morning; he was lying at the entrance to the Rue du Manège, on the pavement in front of M. Henry's house, his face turned towards the barracks. His position at that moment was that of a man who had fallen, not in fleeing from the houses where the firing was supposed to have come from, and which are situated at the other end of the street, but at the moment of entering the Rue du Manège.

I did not think to ask whether these *francs-tireurs* had been found in possession of arms. On seeing me the soldiers shouted "*Erschiessen! Erschiessen!*" (shoot! shoot!), but the doctor calmed them. I had the distinct impression that if he left me for a moment I was lost. Opposite the barracks three or four houses were burning on either side of the Rue du Manège. A soldier was calmly feeding the flames by pouring on a liquid out of a can; no one stopped him, and yet, according to the doctor's report, no one had fired from the house he was burning. We went into the courtyard of the barracks; we were received by a major, who had me searched. The doctor made his report in my presence; he declared that at the moment when he was entering the barracks the citizens opened fire violently on the soldiers from the top of the two houses forming the angle of the street (he even pointed them out with his finger). I did not hear him say that he saw civilians firing. "Are there any soldiers wounded?" asked the major. "No," said the doctor; "and it is really a miracle that in such a violent fusillade no soldiers were wounded."

At one moment three or four little explosions went off in the flames. The soldiers started. "It is the munitions exploding," said the doctor.

After remaining at the barracks about a quarter of an hour the doctor assured me that his escort had been taken from him and that he could not take me to my sister's alone. He accompanied me back to my own house. We found the Rue du Canal full of troopers resting. Two officers whom we met told us that the troops at Hérent had been fired at, and that now the whole village, including the church, was in flames.

During the night nothing of importance occurred. At intervals I heard fusillades in the Rue Vital-Decoster. I tried without success to distinguish two different sounds in the firing.

In the morning I found that some neighbours from the Rue Vital-Decoster had taken refuge in my garden from the night before. A little later my sister and her family took refuge with me. Some soldiers had wanted to shoot my-brother-in-law in his house, accusing him of having fired. Shortly after another neighbour from the Rue Vital-Decoster took refuge in my house, while the door of his house was being smashed in. Fearing that they would pursue him to my house, we fled into the street. After twice taking shelter for a long time in some houses in the Rue des Poissonniers, we reached the house of some friends at the Voer des Capucins. On the way we

joined a patrol of soldiers in the Rue de la Lei. I asked the non-commissioned officer in command if we could walk with them, and whether there was any particular danger in accompanying them. "Do not be anxious," he said, "we are Jägers, and are trained not to fire one cartridge needlessly. We have not fired yet."

At the house of the Voer des Capucins we had several times to shelter in the cellar, as the fusillade was very near. About 5 o'clock I went out to go and see my sister's and my parents' houses. In the middle of the Voer des Capucins opposite the Rue des Jones, four German knapsacks had been left haphazard; in the Place Saint Jacques, in the continuation of the Rue des Jones, at a distance of about 150 metres, a German gun-carriage with a broken wheel had been abandoned. As I was entering the Rue du Souci, after leaving the Rue Saint Hubert, an officer on horseback stopped 50 metres off at the head of a train of wagons and threatened me with his revolver. I held up my hands and approached at a sign from him. "It was a good thing you did not run away," he said, "or I should have fired." I asked him if I might pass along his column.

"You have run your own head into a noose," he said. "I take you as a hostage; you will march in front of me as far as the Porte de Tervueren, and if they fire on us I fire on you." I protested in vain. We set out. A little further on we met a horseman, who assured us that all was calm. I was liberated and went towards the Rue du Canal.

In the Rue de la Lei, at the door of Mlle. Goemans' house, someone told me that the lady (a person of about 80 years of age), had just been killed through her closed window. I saw one pane of glass broken on the first storey and some traces of bullets on the front wall around this window.

On my return to the Voer des Capucins, half-way between the entrance to this street and the Rue des Jones, an old man wearing the uniform of the almshouses was lying dead on the pavement. A woman standing on the threshold of her house told me that a patrol had fired point-blank at him. At the moment when this woman was speaking to me it was still broad daylight.

On the following night I sat up from midnight till 4 o'clock without hearing a shot fired. The next morning (the 27th), at about 9 o'clock, I was in the doorway when a group of mounted officers went past. One of them told me that the town was going to be bombarded and that we had ten minutes to get away.

We left by the Tervueren road, amongst a very large crowd. On the way we had to hold up our hands every time we met any soldiers. Near Leefdael an officer passing in a motor pointed his revolver at us. He brusquely threatened a young man, walking by himself, who was only holding up one hand, as in the other he held a valise, which he was obliged to put down hastily. At Tervueren we were searched several times. We took the electric tram from there to Brussels, where we arrived at about 3 o'clock. I returned to Louvain a week later, on September 3rd. I found my parents' house plundered. A great deal of the furniture was smashed, and the contents of cupboards and drawers were strewn about the rooms. On all sides were bottles of wine. On the ground in front of my linen-cupboard lay a pair of socks belonging to a German soldier. In my sister's house the mirrors on the ground floor were smashed. On the back of the mirrors the marks of the butt end of a rifle could be plainly seen.

14. *Deposition of M. Louis-Herman Grondijs, living at Dordrecht, formerly Professor at the Technical Institute of that town.**

I wish to state that I belong to the Protestant religion; my evidence will therefore not be suspected of partiality.

At Louvain I was the guest of Professor Scharpé. Together we made all preparations to maintain calm among the population of our district, which, moreover, did preserve an attitude of great calm and gave the Germans a very good reception. I witnessed no hostile demonstration on the part of the citizens. It was on Tuesday, the 25th, that the incendiarism began. In the afternoon a rumour spread in the town of the arrival of the English or Belgians. After supper I heard firing. As my nationality shielded me from any annoyance, I went out into the town to see what was happening, then I returned and went to bed. The next morning I went out again at 4 o'clock. Indignant at the sight of all that was going on, I went to the Grand' Place, and addressing Major von Manteuffel, who was holding a review of the troops, I informed him of the behaviour of German soldiers whom I had seen taking women and girls away by the Porte de Bruxelles. I asked him whether such abductions were in conformity with the honour of the German army. He replied: "Is it in conformity with the honour of the Belgian army that civilians should fire at us from their windows?" I failed to see the logic of this reply. I had indeed as yet—and I had been in Louvain for several days—met with no case of a civilian firing at the Germans. I could not, therefore, understand the Major's remark. I asked him whether he had not ground for opening an inquiry. He answered that I must address myself to the guard. I pointed out to him that I considered I had addressed myself to the right person. (This guard consisted of a few soldiers and a sergeant-major.) To facilitate the Major's task I mentioned to him the widow Ackermans, who had been taken by the Germans with her daughter. He asked me if I supposed that these women had been violated. I answered that I could not assert this. The Major said finally that he had no time to see to the affair.

* M. Grondijs has published an account of the events which he witnessed: *Les Allemands en Belgique Louvain et Aerschot. Notes d'un témoin hollandais.* Librairie Berger-Levrault. Paris-Nancy. No. 34 of the series: *Pages d'Histoire*, 1914-1916.

I observed that the Collegiate Church of Saint-Pierre had been deliberately set on fire. The surrounding houses were at this moment intact.

As I was passing the vegetable market a soldier stopped me. Taking me by the arm he showed me the corpse of a civilian. I asked him for what reason this civilian had been killed. He replied that it was impossible to make an inquiry in the existing circumstances.

On the morning of Wednesday, August 26th, Mgr. Ladeuze, Rector of the University, and Canon Cauchie saw in the Rue de Namur two German soldiers firing into the street. This could only have been done for a pretext to maintain that civilians had fired.

On Thursday, the 27th, having gone to the Town Hall at about 10 o'clock, I heard a conversation between two German officers. One of them said that up to the present the Germans had only burnt villages, and that this was the first time they had set an important town on fire.

As I was going towards the station I saw a German civilian on horseback giving orders to the soldiers and instructing them to retire because the town was to be bombarded.

I retraced my steps. I met numerous people who knew nothing of what was taking place, notably Canon Cauchie. M. Cauchie begged me to accompany him to Brussels. I did so. Mgr. Ladeuze joined us, and we went towards Tervueren. At the gates of the town were four German troopers, who were insulting the frightened crowd which was leaving the town.

I note that the regiments sent in this direction are almost all composed of Protestant elements. Their hatred of the priests was manifest. On the way the soldiers cried: "Down with Catholicism." The priests were constantly insulted.

At Tervueren our papers were looked at. I was authorised to continue my journey. The two priests were detained in spite of my protestations. I observed that numerous ecclesiastics were grouped in a field, guarded by soldiers, who were insulting them. I went towards this guard, and desired to be taken to the sub-lieutenant. The sergeant made objections. I went into the middle of the town to notify the Major that they were arresting two savants. He replied that at Aerschot they had killed one of the greatest strategists in Germany. I replied that there was nothing to prove that these priests were guilty. He told me that the priests were exciting the populace. Finally, however, he accompanied me to the field. He confirmed the order of arrest. I explained to the priests the reasons that were given for the confirmation. Mgr. Ladeuze said that he appealed to the Duke of Arenberg. The Major replied that he did not know the Duke of Arenberg, and that he confirmed the order. I went to interview the military Governor at Brussels. I pointed out that the charge of exciting the population was certainly false in the case of priests and monks who did not belong to the parochial ministry.

The military Governor told me that Mgr. Ladeuze and M. Cauchie would be liberated. I asked him for the same treatment in the case of the other priests and pointed out to him that they would be unable to justify the arrest of all these priests, and that it would be impolitic to give to the war the character of a religious war. He gave some instructions to his aide-de-camp. I left by motor with the latter. We found the priests again at Tervueren. M. Cauchie and Mgr. Ladeuze were at once liberated. Twenty-three other priests were taken to Brussels.

Among the priests at Tervueren, in another group, were Mgr. Willemsen, former Rector of the American College, and Mgr. de Becker, Rector of this college, also Père Dupierreux, of the Society of Jesus.

The last-named was shot because he was found with a notebook containing a criticism of the acts committed by the Germans.

Mgr. Willemsen and Mgr. de Becker were liberated on the intervention of the Minister of the United States of America.

A third group of monks was liberated at Ruysbroeck.

On being questioned the witness adds:—

At the moment when I left Louvain on the 27th there was no sign of resistance; all the terrified population was fleeing.

15. *Declaration of M. Sterckx (alias Sylvain), living at Louvain.*

On Tuesday, August 25th, at 8 o'clock in the evening, I was returning home across the Rue de la Station and the Place de la Station. A new German regiment had arrived to replace the one we had had for some days. Apart from the requisitioning by force of two thousand mattresses on the day after their arrival, the first occupants had behaved decently, and in no way annoyed the inhabitants. I, for my part, had a good forty soldiers to put up. In my house, as well as in the houses of my neighbours, everything had been left undisturbed.

Scarcely had I arrived at the entrance to the Boulevard de Tirlemont when I heard behind me shouts of alarm and a charge of cavalry, which terrified all who were in the street. At these shouts the soldiers lodging with the inhabitants came out hastily, their weapons in their hand. I arrived home about 8.30 o'clock, and soon after a violent fusillade alarmed everybody. My neighbours called for help, everyone wanted to escape, but there was no time. The door of No. 36 had just been burst in. I rushed into the corridor to open the door of the house, which was also attacked. I opened it and at the same moment a soldier seized me by the throat, pressing his revolver against my chest. Two soldiers took hold of my body, and there I was in the street, with my hands tightly tied behind my back, on my way to the station. I implored my torturers to allow me to go into my house again to fetch some shoes and some of my belongings. I was struck a violent blow in the back with the butt end of a rifle and fell to the ground.

A fresh blow made me get up again quickly. Already the houses on the boulevard were in flames ; the fire continued and gradually the station was filling up with citizens of Louvain who had been taken prisoner. We all protested violently against such measures. The threat of a general fusillade was the only answer we obtained. The next day some wagons arrived ; some of the prisoners were thrown in pell-mell ; one soldier seized me by the head, another by the feet, another by tender parts of my body. I fainted from the frightful pain ; the jolting of the wagon brought me round and I found myself lying under the tilt of the vehicle. A violent blow with the butt of a rifle put me in a more secure position. The wagon went in the direction of the Boulevard de Diest. A crowd of women in tears suddenly attracted my attention ; I saw a hand raised as though in a last farewell : I recognised my poor wife. The procession advanced and we went along the Canal and out by the Porte de Malines. Corpses strewed the whole way ; others, in groups, were intertwined. When we arrived outside the Porte de Malines the torturers lifted me roughly out of the vehicle. Without the assistance of the driver I should certainly have been crushed to death. The bonds that held me, and which were so thin and tight that the flesh was deeply bitten into, broke (the wounds have healed up now, but the scars will certainly remain for a long time yet ; my hands and arms remained numb for more than three days). Having my hands free, I was pushed into the midst of an already very large group of wretched prisoners. The first I recognized were MM. Bauchau, father and son, owners of La Vignette mills and brewery. The group was augmented by the arrival of some country people, men, women and children. It was then nearly 7 in the evening ; the prisoners were driven through the fields.

All the prisoners were carefully searched. Everything we had in the way of money or securities was stolen from us. An officer left me my watch when he saw my name engraved on the back.

We were marched about like this until 11 o'clock at night, when we were ordered to halt, and had to pass the night in the open country without shelter of any kind. Finally, huddling closely together to try to warm ourselves, so chilled were we by fear and ague, we fell asleep. Our rest did not last long. A driving rain soaked our aching limbs and increased the stench arising from this cluster of human beings. At 4 o'clock the Germans ordered us on. I had as my only clothing an under shirt, thin trousers, and a summer waistcoat, and on my feet a pair of worn-out shoes.

On the 27th, at 4 o'clock in the morning, we were given a piece of bread ; then we continued our journey across country until 3 in the afternoon, when we arrived at the Church of Rotselaer, where we were shut up. The church was already full of peasants, who had been there for several hours. We found many women there, surrounded by a swarm of children of all ages, and three priests, one of whom was an old man over 80 years of age.

Then we set out again. When the three priests left the church the German soldiers insulted them and spat in their faces. The old priest drew himself up suddenly and cried out that not one of those who were around him had any cause to reproach himself. We passed along the canal and through the Rue du Canal, Rue de Malines, and Place Marguerite, and came out presently into the Grand' Place of Louvain. In the Rue du Canal several houses were burning ; in other streets all the houses had been burnt. From thence we were led by the Rue de la Station to the station. A long train, composed of cattle-trucks still full of manure and refuse, served as our shelter. We were crowded in and packed together in rows, from 80 to 100 persons in each truck. Our truck contained several women, a large number of children, who were crying bitterly, and as many men as could be crowded in. Each truck was guarded by four soldiers with loaded rifles and fixed bayonets, two soldiers on each side.

On August 28th we left for Aix-la-Chapelle ; from thence we went towards Düren, Cologne, Düren ; then Cologne again, where we arrived at about 11.30, at Deutz-Köln.

Our passage through these towns was hailed with various cries. One of us who had ventured to get out of the truck told us of the strange inscriptions he had read on the carriages. In large letters the fall of Antwerp, the flight of King Albert, the capture of Brussels, the capture of Ghent, the crushing of the French, the taking of Belfort were announced.

As the shouts of the Germans were increasing, we asked the women to show their young children to the populace. At sight of them the inhabitants of Cologne—who had thought they were insulting Belgian soldiers conquered and prisoners—fell back and pity took the place of clamour. To the whole of this crowd of famished and miserable prisoners German generosity granted a few pails of water. It is impossible to describe the eagerness with which this flock of human beings flung itself on the drink, which became in no time a filthy fluid.

A new order was given and the prisoners were driven out ; Luna Park was our destination. We were then penned up, in groups, in the various buildings of the fair. I, for my part, had a bench belonging to the side-show known as the "merry-go-round." In a few moments the benches were all occupied ; we thought we deserved a little rest. The military thought otherwise. The keepers picked out haphazard some person, and obliged him to place himself in the middle of the wheel and there kneel down. We were threatened with shooting. Men stood up with wild eyes, and deafening cries rang out ; I saw several of my compatriots who had gone mad. Others implored the soldiers for a piece of bread or a glass of water ; others asked for their belongings, that they might go home to their relatives. We remained at Luna Park until noon on the next day. At about 10 a.m. some food was distributed to the women and children ; then at last came the men's turn ; one loaf to 10 men and permission to drink as much water as they wished. At noon we set out for the station, where, instead of the filthy cattle-trucks of the day before,

we were authorized to take our places in a train composed of third and fourth class carriages. The places were taken by storm ; the soldiers made the people who were coming up occupy the still vacant places, and in a few seconds the train was overflowing with travellers. The overheated compartments, the pervading odours, the state of dirt we were all in, will suggest an idea of the situation since our departure at noon on the 28th until about noon on the 31st. The sufferings we had gone through since our arrest, since our painful pilgrimage from Rotselaer to Louvain, our transport from Louvain to Cologne, were all trifles compared with what we experienced on our return to Cologne. The refuse, the unspeakable filth, the foul air we had to breathe, added to the hunger and thirst and terror, will explain how it was that in this hell many of the travellers either killed themselves or went raving mad.

We often heard shots fired by our guards. Each time one of our number fell, struck by a bullet.

At last our sufferings seemed to have reached the limit of what a human being can stand. We arrived, hideous and revolting, at Brussels. Nowhere could we find any water to wash with ; barely a few mouthfuls of a liquid I am incapable of naming. Before our departure from Cologne we had been allowed to take some empty bottles out of a restaurant-car and fill them with water. This was a slight comfort to some of us on the journey.

On our arrival at Brussels a distribution of bread took place, and it was announced at the same time that food would be served out to the women and children at 1 o'clock.

The bread we were given was mouldy and the inside was rotten.

Protestations arose on all sides, and as a result the attention of the German officers was attracted, and they inquired the reason of the disturbance. After some minutes some ladies came and brought us baskets of food. When we had taken this nourishment, the men were sent away towards Haren, and thence towards Vilvorde, then along the Willebroeck Canal to the village of Sempst. To our great surprise the commander ordered his men to grant us entire and complete liberty. We departed across country. The group of unfortunate prisoners broke up and in fairly compact bands set off at haphazard into the night. Scarcely had this painful march started when in half an hour it was suddenly checked by a German patrol. Fortunately the commanding officer deigned to listen to our complaints, and ordered his men to let us go free. We asked for authorisation to return to Louvain. The officer ordered us to go in the direction of Malines, saying that if his order were not obeyed he would have us all shot.

Our painful Calvary continued ; we wandered from village to village until we arrived at the outskirts of Antwerp, where we were rescued by the Comité de Secours, who satisfied our hunger and thirst and then escorted us to Ghent ; here we were lodged in the Palais des Fêtes.

16. *Account given by the Abbé Wouters, Parish Priest of Rotselaer.*

I think that on Sunday, August 15th,* some Belgian field-hospital attendants came to the presbytery at Rotselaer. Five or six of them lodged there. The next day they left before noon ; the Belgian soldiers stayed till about 2 o'clock. A fusillade could be heard and also artillery fire. About 2 o'clock the Belgians left, after warning us that in two hours the Germans would be in the village. It was true ; at about 4 o'clock the Germans rang and entered the presbytery. All the occupants had to line up at once in the garden. Some people from the village joined us, led by the Germans. We were informed that we were prisoners of war and that the Burgomaster must present himself ; he was sent for. The examination of the house began at once. Everything was searched, from attic to cellar. Accompanied by an officer, revolver in hand, and followed by four soldiers with fixed bayonets, I had to go the round of the village to warn the inhabitants to refrain from any hostile demonstration against the soldiers. Return to the presbytery. We were shut up in the parlour—three priests, the Burgomaster of Rotselaer, who had arrived in the interval, and the Burgomaster of Gelrode, a refugee at Rotselaer. The time passed slowly ; two sentinels were placed at the door. In the adjoining room the Staff was having supper. About 7 o'clock the Burgomaster was summoned ; they demanded 30,000 francs and 800 kilogrammes of oats. The Burgomaster declared that he could not supply the sum of money ; as for the oats, he would do what he could. A night of terror ; the sentinels talked in mysterious tones at our door.

At 11 o'clock the priest was summoned for the investigation of the church ; everything was searched, from the sacristy to the rood-loft. On our return it was impossible to make a way through the masses of soldiers, who were lying everywhere.

At midnight an officer came and told us that the Colonel had just been killed at Aerschot. . . .

Insults on the part of the sentinels : "*Schweine*," "*canaille*," . . .

On the following day, in the forenoon, a General (Excellence) came to us in the parlour ; he was polite, and even seemed to apologise for having to treat us thus. The Burgomaster of Gelrode was allowed to go away.

After his departure insolence and brutality on the part of the sentinels.

The servant was allowed to bring us some food.

* I dare not answer for the accuracy of the dates. (The date mentioned by the Abbé Wouters is certainly wrong ; it should be Tuesday, August 18th, as it was on Wednesday, the 19th, that the Germans occupied the commune of Rotselaer. *Note of the Belgian Committee of Inquiry.*)

At 4 o'clock we were led into the midst of the German soldiers, who were in crowds in the Chaussée de Werchter. Insults and mockery, especially for the priests.

At length an officer came and told us we were free. We were led back, politely this time, to the presbytery. There were no longer Germans there—for one hour.

The Burgomaster returned home. All was quiet at the presbytery. Towards evening a new invasion. A colonel (von Jacobi), a captain and a doctor descended on us before noon next day.

Very polite. They only asked for the vacant rooms; we occupied our usual apartment (priest, curate, and maid-servant).

The next morning the colonel left, thanking me for my kind hospitality and saying "Adieu."

Then began the road to Calvary: at least twenty houses burnt down; four or five men killed; for what reason?

Fresh round of the village, as above.

On Saturday (August 22nd) we were imprisoned all night in the church with all the men from the centre of the village. In the morning we were allowed to come out. No religious services on Sunday. In the evening, again imprisoned, then during the day and the following night. Here I have forgotten the dates entirely.

The women were able to bring us some black bread (there was no other) and some coffee or water.

Other prisoners arrived from Hérent with the priest (over 70 years of age), from Wackerzeel, Thildonck, accompanied by women and children. There were 1,000 of us in the church. We were allowed to satisfy our natural wants under supervision, and to bring what food we had left (bread and water). We passed the night in the church, and the morning of the next day. This made four or five days that we had not slept nor had any water to wash with. All were worn out. In the afternoon we were made to come out and placed in rows of four in the Chaussée. Insults and abuse. Soon we set out for Louvain. The old curé of Hérent was quite exhausted, and followed with difficulty as far as Louvain, where I saw him for the last time.

The whole of the Louvain road was covered with German soldiers. Short halt behind Putkapel. Along our route everything was still intact.

We entered Louvain by the canal and the Rue du Canal. No ruins. Arrival at the Grand' Place. What a scene! The Church of Saint-Pierre! Rest in front of the Town Hall. Fatigue obliged me to lie down on the pavement while the houses were still burning.

Still more prisoners from Louvain and the neighbourhood were arriving. I soon saw fresh prisoners arrive from Rotselaer, women, children, old men, among them a blind old man 80 years of age, and the wife of the doctor at Rotselaer, torn from a sick bed. (She died on the way to Germany.)

Soon there were 2,000 of us. Departure for the station about 7 p.m. We were herded on the left of the station, behind the urinals. We lay down in the cinders; we tried to find our friends and acquaintances.

At 8 p.m. we were to be put into trains for Germany. It took a long, long time. At 10 o'clock, alas! all were packed in. What trucks! the horses had just come out of them. What a smell! and no seats.

Fortunately I was in a carriage that had been used for the transport of troops; it had seats; it was a relief to be able to sit down. We were about fifty, and all from Rotselaer; four or five infants in arms.

It was 10 o'clock at night. Were we going? I still hoped it was only a threat. The hours passed slowly and painfully.

5.30 a.m., the train started for Tirlemont. . . . Liège. There the Germans, both officers and men, were waiting to greet us with insults: prelude to what awaited us in Germany. On each side of our compartment was a sliding door. One was always open, and three soldiers stood there with fixed bayonets. As for me, I was placed in front of the open door, in a good position to receive all the insults, especially as I was a priest. After a halt of two hours we continued our sad journey towards Aix-la-Chapelle. On the way insults from our three keepers, who kept their bayonets fixed. The arrival of our train had no doubt been announced in Germany, for at all the stations there was a mob to insult us; naturally I was always the principal target.

We reached Aix-la-Chapelle at 3 p.m. For one hour the military came and insulted and threatened us. An officer came and spat in my face. We started again at 4 o'clock. A long journey, by what route I do not know.

We reached Cologne at 7 p.m. We got out of the train, and were all, men, women and children, made to go through the streets under police supervision. Here the faces were more humane.

At about 9 o'clock we were taken into a courtyard, where we passed the night in the open air or under an open gallery on a little straw. Owing to our fatigue and to so many sleepless nights we slept all the same. The next morning the women and children were separated from the men. We were grouped in tens. Each ten received a military loaf and some water. A much-belated official came to tell us that we were to be taken through Dutch Limburg into our own country, where we should be free. Bitter illusion! At 10 o'clock the men were led in rows of four into the street leading to the station.

Halt of half an hour in the street. The women marched along beside us and the Germans were able to regale themselves with this sad sight for three-quarters of an hour. Continual insults—especially directed at the three priests.

We were taken to Cologne station.

This time we were in a passenger compartment. Wherever there was room for eight or ten, we were sixteen ; ten sitting close together, six standing. We started for Düren, Aix-la-Chapelle.

What a long journey ! We took about 50 hours to reach Liège. During the halts there were always insults, abuse, false reports : Antwerp taken, the King wounded, the Queen dead. London bombed by a Zeppelin ; the Germans in Paris.

At Liège, a halt of four hours in the stifling station. It was Sunday, August 30th. What a Sunday ! We started again, and reached Louvain towards evening. The town was burning, as it was when we left. One hour's wait—then departure for Brussels, which we reached about midnight.

In the meantime we had been given—one loaf, which made us sick.

At Brussels next morning, August 31st, we received a loaf of good white bread.

During the journey several people had gone out of their minds, one in my compartment. At 1 o'clock the train started for Schaerbeek. There we were made to get out. The women were no longer with us, and I have had no news of them whatever. Then began the most painful part for me. We had to go on foot and we were worn out after all the privations of those last few days. The weak and aged could not keep up any longer. What became of them ? I know not. We marched, marched under the leadership of the German monsters. We passed Haren and Vilvorde. Here one person threw himself into the canal and was drowned in sight of the indifferent Germans. We still marched on by highroads, country roads, or across the fields.

We went through a village. Was it Sempst ? I do not know. We were made to lie down in a clover field for three-quarters of an hour. It was 7.30 p.m. After this farce, I no longer saw any German uniforms. We were told in French that we were to go to Malines, where we should be free, and the Bishop would tell us where we were to go !

Off to Malines ! Two of my parishioners dragged me along on their arms. I could no longer hold myself upright. At last we arrived at the Porte de Bruxelles. We were free ! But where were we to go ? No one knew, as the bridge of the canal was turned.

Terrible indecision ! And it was 11 o'clock at night, August 31st. At length we lay down in the grass at the side of the canal, in the rainy night. And yet we slept. The next day we separated and went in various directions. Several went to their villages and fell—as I learnt later—into the hands of the Germans again.

As for me, I set out at 5.30 a.m. on September 1st. After walking for two hours, I reached Malines, by the Sennegat, and my pitiable condition attracted the attention of the few people who were still in the town. I followed a kind-hearted workman, who did all he could for me. The curate, M. Devadder, came to fetch me and give me lodging.

17. *Narrative of M. Van Steenbeeck, Professor at the Academy of Music at Louvain.*

The German troops entered the town of Louvain on Wednesday, August 19th. The armies followed one another without the least difficulty, and without any incident arising among the Louvain population. They were well received, and moreover expressed themselves entirely satisfied.

On Tuesday, the 25th, they said that the last troops would leave. At about 5 o'clock in the afternoon numerous other effectives entered, to pass the night in the town and its environs.

About 7.30 p.m. there was an "alarm." For some long time I had heard the roar of cannon in the neighbourhood ; it seemed to me to come from the direction of Malines. The soldiers from their ranks had thanked us again warmly and saluted us, and punctually at 8 o'clock our houses were closed. But scarcely five minutes later, we suddenly heard our houses being bombarded with rifle-shots and machine-guns. The bullets rained around us. What was to be done ? What had happened ? This lasted from five to ten minutes, and then the 281 soldiers shouted with joy ; then the fire was renewed for ten minutes, and again the cries of joy resounded.

The Germans pushed on further into the town and burned down the buildings. What cruel anxiety we went through ! It was the most terrible time possible. My house was literally riddled with bullets ; the stones fell away in pieces. We spent the night in the cellar, until the next morning. About 11 o'clock, a drummer came and announced that all doors were to be opened, and that a white flag must be hoisted.

At 1.30, however, we were informed that we were to leave our houses as soon as possible, as everything was to be set on fire, and the town bombarded.

With all speed we escaped and fled towards the station. The whole of the Boulevard de Tirlemont was on fire, and the Boulevards were full of corpses ; the Place de la Station was already destroyed by fire. When we reached it, we were separated from our families, knocked about and beaten unmercifully with the butts of rifles, treated with the utmost barbarity, women and children isolated from the men on opposite sides of the square.

What a piteous sight ! Women and children were weeping and howling ! It was terrible ! The men were at once placed in front of the Porte de Diest with hands up. Soldiers were firing in the direction of Kessel-Loo ; others were shooting from Kessel-Loo, to make us think we were being exposed to the fire of the French troops.

We remained in this situation for an hour. At 3 o'clock they marched us off, beneath the eyes of our families, between German soldiers, by the Boulevard de Diest, along the canal, by the Chaussée de Malines as far as Hérent ; the soldiers struck the old men who could not keep up, and called us "beasts," *Schweinhunde*, etc., and spat on us. Then we were taken back to Louvain and

then once again to Bueken ; then a second return to Hérent, to set out again after that to beyond Bueken, and return once more to the spot where there was an "encampment." There an officer told us that the German troops had been fired on and a colonel killed. We had to start off again immediately, towards Thildonck, I believe ; it was absolutely pitch dark. We then returned to the "encampment," still passing on each side of the Chaussée de Malines the burning houses which they had set on fire. When we returned to the site of the camp (beyond Bueken) it was 10 o'clock at night ; we were able to rest in a field, under the stars. We asked in vain for a little water to drink ; we received absolutely nothing ! After spending the night in the rain we had to get up at 3 o'clock. It was Thursday, the 27th. We received a little brownish bread, of which it was impossible to swallow two mouthfuls—it tasted of vinegar—and a drink of water. Then we marched all the morning towards Thildonck. It was raining ; my companion had an umbrella, and we were able to collect the water that dripped from the umbrella in our hands to quench our thirst. We marched thus all morning without a halt. About 10 o'clock, we were given a little water drawn from a well. The water was dirty and one would not have cared to wash one's hands in it ; in spite of this we drank it like parched animals in order not to die of thirst. We had to carry the soldiers' knapsacks. Then on the march again from 1 p.m., as far as the *château* of M. Moerinckx at Rotselaer.

Then we were conducted to the church. We were there informed that forty-three of us would be shot. We received a little more water. I wrote a line of farewell to my family. The order was then given to return to Louvain. We were nearly three thousand in number, including some inhabitants of Rotselaer—women, men and children ; they also had fired, so the Germans said !

When we had gone half-way the leader shouted out : "Antwerp has surrendered !" The soldiers shouted "*Hoch !*" three times. However, I understood that it was false.

We entered Louvain by Wilsele, Rue du Canal, Rue des Pêcheurs, the Fishmarket, Rue de Malines, and the Place Marguérite, as far as the Grand' Place ; there we were detained for some time between German troops, while the town blazed. It was then six o'clock.

After standing there for an hour, we had to go to the station by the Rue de la Station. We saw in this same street German soldiers looting the houses ; they took pleasure in letting us see it. In the town and at Kessel-Loo the fire was increasing.

The dead bodies were lying in the streets.

After waiting an hour, from 8 to 9, in the station, we were put into cattle trucks to be transported to Cologne. A disgusting odour pervaded the trucks—they were full of filth ; we were given nothing to eat.

On Friday, the 28th, at 6 a.m., the train started, but already some people had fallen ill. Having eaten nothing before starting, we reached Cologne at midnight. In the station at Cologne, the officers insulted us in every way ; we were obliged to hand over everything that we possessed. After being led through the streets between gendarmes, we were conducted to some sheds. The people shouted : "Kill them !" and again we passed the night without eating.

A priest was taken out of our shed, and I am afraid that he was shot. The Germans have a special grudge against priests.

About 9 o'clock we succeeded in obtaining for ourselves, in return for money, a few white rolls. At 10 o'clock, we went back to our trucks.

These trucks were decent, but contained an excessive number of people.

We reached Belgium again. About 6 o'clock we found ourselves before the town of Verviers. Some people found means to give us some food ; we had made them understand by gestures how hungry we were, and how much we had had to suffer. The officer of the train had seen everything ; he gave orders for the doors and windows to be shut. The train went on a little way and then stopped near Liège.

We stopped in front of Liège (Chénée) from 7 o'clock in the evening (Saturday) until 11 o'clock on Sunday morning.

During this night some people went mad.

Arrived at Liège, some of the inhabitants again succeeded in procuring some nourishment for us ; we arrived in the station at Liège at noon and left again at 3 p.m. It was here that one person threw himself under the train. About 8 p.m. we reached Corbeek-Loo. The lights were out ; here and there in the stations there was a little light ; this produced a phantasmagorical effect in our carriages. Here and there a shot rang out. . . . Then again a bugle sounded Then came the shouts of sentries and here and there madmen. . . . What barbarity ! . . .

We reached Brussels about midnight. This journey had thus lasted fifty-two hours, and that after being shut up for ten hours in a shed !

If it happened that we were obliged to satisfy a natural want, we had to do so at the side of the carriages, in the sight of all even of our own children.

On our arrival at Brussels we asked for food, but could obtain nothing. And we had to remain in the carriages in an unspeakably filthy atmosphere ; again a considerable number of people went mad during the night. In the morning (Monday, the 31st) I awoke early and I wept. . . . The officer asked me if I were ill. I said : "No," but told him that I was weeping from pain, from sorrow, from hunger, because of my family and because I was innocent.

Then, suddenly, during the morning, a distribution of white bread was made, but we learnt that it had been given by the town of Brussels, and provided by the Burgomaster, M. Max. What joy ! But could it satisfy such famished people ? The women and children of Rotselaer were

lodged in Brussels and there remained. About 11 o'clock we also received a visit from a commissary of police of Brussels. We asked him where we should be sent ; he was able to sign to us : to Malines or to Antwerp.

At 2 p.m. the train started. At Schaerbeek everyone had to get down and go on foot to Vilvorde by Evere.

There we were able to rest and . . . to go and drink some beer.

A German soldier suggested to me and to my companion L.D. that we should escape, but I refused. My friend accepted and I do not know what became of him.

Once again the march continued, and then a halt was made. I then accosted a young lady and begged her to convey my visiting card to Brussels. Once more a German soldier asked me if I wished to escape, but I did not accept his proposal. We set off again. The soldiers fell away gradually ; soon our group was alone. Certain of us, however, were hit by bullets. Again we arrived in the midst of German soldiers, and further on we came upon an encampment. The officer in command obliged us to remain here for half-an-hour ; then he let us go free, but only in the direction of Malines, in order to put us between two fires. We turned our steps, therefore, towards Malines and arrived there about 10 p.m. A Belgian sentinel accosted us. We were able to continue our route and arrived at the lock of Battel. We asked leave to enter the town, but had to wait until the following day.

At 4 o'clock we resumed our negotiations with the sentry, but in vain ; we could not pass. We were nearly desperate. During the night, indeed, some people threw themselves into the water. . . . We decided to push on to Zennegat, and there, fortunately, we were able to pass.

Some boatmen advised us to go to Willebroeck, where the Belgian army was. We went there, about 1,200 in number ; others took the Malines-Louvain road, and others again the Malines-Antwerp road.

How glad we were to see the Belgian soldiers ! We were saved ! Free, free ! At Willebroeck we did not take long to eat and wash ourselves a little ; we had not done so for a week. We had not even been able to take off our shoes.

In the evening we went by train to Ghent, to the Palais des Fêtes, where we had a good supper, and were at last able to rest as we pleased.

The Germans declare that the inhabitants of Louvain fired on them. They lie ! We know what happened.

We know what a farce the Germans acted. The German soldiers were drunk that evening. They placed the corpse of one of their men, whom they had shot, in the Rue des Joyeuses Entrées, to make people believe that the civilians had fired. He was in exactly the position of someone who has been shot. They also had a little cart, on which were knapsacks and helmets, which they threw about the place. This is the truth.

I imagine also that they experienced a defeat in the neighbourhood of Thildonck and wished to wreak their vengeance on us.

Where are our mothers, our wives, our children to-day ? What a cruel separation ! In my own case, for example, I had no opportunity to say another word to my mother in the Place de la Station. What must she think ? Is she still alive, or has she died of sorrow and starvation ? Was it for this that she lived so long, to endure such suffering in her old age ?

And what can be said of the case of a friend who lived opposite me, and whose wife was struck down by bullets ? In the morning she lay on the stairs, and her two little girls were playing with her as though she were still alive. In the afternoon the father of these children was hit in his turn, and expired . . . leaving the poor children alone. . . .

18. *Deposition of M. Julien Van Goetsenhoven, Merchant, of Kessel-Loo.*

On Thursday, August 20th, 1914, at Corbeek-Loo, ten soldiers arrested at their own house the couple Lamproye and their daughter, my own niece, aged about sixteen. They took them to the *château* of M. Frantzen near by, forced the young girl to drink, and obliged the parents to remain motionless, while they pointed their rifles at them. The girl was led on to a lawn, where about five or six soldiers violated her, and as she offered an energetic resistance they struck her five times with bayonets. She was in a most serious condition, and the parish priest, who ministered to her, told me that he did not think that she had survived. She had been brought back the same day to her home, and the following day the parish priest, for whom the parents had sent, had her removed to the hospital at Louvain.

On Tuesday evening, August 25th, the Germans began to set on fire the town of Louvain and the neighbouring communes, saying that it was because the inhabitants had fired at them. In the night I saw that Louvain was burning on all sides. On Wednesday morning I escaped with my wife, but on the way we were surprised by the Germans. They drove all the women from the direction of the Tirlemont Road, killed a young man who was with us, and binding us with ropes made us walk in front of the troops. At this moment there were about one hundred and fifty of us, and without food or drink they made us accompany their army until yesterday morning at 10 o'clock.* They then let us go.

On Wednesday, August 19th, a party of Germans had arrested four men and three women, members of my family. One young woman was already visibly enceinte. Her husband is in the

* August 27th, 1914.

army. They conducted all these persons to Blauwput, shut them up in a house, and then took the young woman alone into another empty house. She was given up to five soldiers for two hours. When she returned, her father and another man had to carry her, and took her home in an indescribable condition. On the road from Louvain to Hérent I saw numbers of houses burning. Incendiary fires had been lighted while the inhabitants were occupying them, and I saw more than twenty corpses of people who had been unable to flee and who were burnt to death.

19. *Deposition of Alphonse Wijnants, Blacksmith, Resident of Kessel-Loo.*

I was living at Louvain, at the Porte de Tirlemont. The Germans had been in the town for a week. On Tuesday, August 25th, they were quietly in their billets with the inhabitants, when all at once a bugle sounded. Next we heard a sharp fusillade and artillery fire, so that I thought an engagement must be taking place with the French. I stayed in the house and saw from the upper storey that the town was already on fire, as well as the surrounding villages.

On Wednesday, August 26th, some German soldiers arrived in our quarter. Everyone had to quit his house. The women were separated from the men, who were forced to stay there with their arms raised. I also was in the street in this position. The Germans went from house to house, setting fire to them. For this purpose they broke the window panes and drew from their pockets a small thin stick, which they set alight with a match; this they then threw into the house, and a few minutes later it was on fire. Almost all the houses in the Chaussée de Tirlemont were set on fire in this way.

Before I had been taken prisoner I saw from the window that people had been fastened by the neck and had their hands tied behind their backs, and had also been bound to wagons. I saw, too, that some were bound by one hand to a cart-wheel and were obliged to bend when the wheel began to turn, in order not to be dragged along by force. About noon we were taken to the station at Louvain. On the way I saw some corpses of civilians. On the Boulevard I saw the houses being broken into, especially that of M. Claes the deputy, and these buildings were set on fire. In the Place de la Station they were knocking down the walls with cannon. Groups of civilians of all classes were assembled there.

I was one of a group of about 400 or 500 persons. We were driven forward by soldiers, who struck us with the butt-end of their rifles when we dropped behind.

We were driven towards the canal. Here and there I saw the bodies of civilians lying on the ground, in particular that of the hairdresser Armée, and also Vanderest a manufacturer of shoes. His little dog was lying beside his body.

We reached Hérent; we were made to march as close as possible to the burning houses.

At one moment we had to leave the road because everything was on fire.

In the fields we were placed in front of trenches made by the soldiers, and they stood before us as if about to shoot us. We had to cross the fields and jump the ditches. Old men who could no longer manage to get across were roughly pushed forward. We had to pass the night on the ground in a freshly ploughed field, and it was raining; we were soaked and covered with mud. Among us were people of every class and all ages. A large number were without hats, and had slippers on their feet; they were as they were when they had been driven from their homes. It was the officer who ordered us to be thus treated, especially to be placed near the trenches, and to be made to jump the ditches.

On Thursday, the 27th, we were placed in rows of four between soldiers; at the officers' command we were marched from one side of the fields to the other; sometimes we arrived at the same place, and we had to go back to where we had come from. The Germans forced us to walk in the mud even when there was a clean path at the side. Here and there a soldier was seized with pity and offered us a drink from his water bottle, but we received nothing to eat. In the afternoon we were shut up in the church at Rotselaer, where other inhabitants of Louvain had already arrived. Then we were taken to the Grand' Place at Louvain. Here the officers had an interview with MM. van der Kelen and Schmit. We were led to the station and placed in cattle trucks, together with the women and children. We were standing up, packed closely together in these trucks, the floor of which was covered with a thick layer of horse dung. The stench was sickening. We remained in these trucks from Thursday night until 1 a.m. on Friday. We had still had nothing to eat since the Wednesday morning.

We were allowed to get out at Cologne. A motley crowd was waiting for us at the station. They made all kinds of gestures to show us that we were going to be shot or hanged.

We were taken to the "Luna Park" and shut up in the hall of the merry-go-round. Some bakers came in, and those who had German money were able to buy some bread. We stayed there till noon, and were then led back to the station; we were crowded into fourth class carriages. The train moved slowly along and stopped frequently, so that we only reached Brussels on Sunday evening. Several persons went mad during this journey and jumped from the train, and thus perished. We remained at Bruxelles-Nord from the Sunday night until noon on Monday. In the forenoon the police of Saint-Josse-ten-Noode came to see us, and brought with them bakers who distributed bread to us. Also, the sick, the women, and the children were released. The rest had to get into the carriages again, and we were taken to Schaerbeek. From thence we were driven through Haeren and Vilvorde, as far as Sempst. There we were released. It was Monday afternoon. We could not enter the town of Malines as it was occupied by Belgian troops. We had to spend the night on the grass. The next day we went as far as Willebroeck, and thence to Saint Nicolas by train. When I was taken prisoner

I had an overcoat in which was a purse containing over 300 francs in silver. The soldiers took my coat, abstracted the money, and did not allow me to take my coat with me. In the Place de la Station I saw them take away a pocket-book from M. Pierre Tossen, who was also a prisoner, and remove the bank-notes from it; the pocket-book was then returned to him.

The witness adds: When all was still calm at Louvain, certain German officers entered the shops. They asked whether much German money had been received, and when the shopkeepers showed their tills they seized the money, giving a warrant in exchange, and adding, "He who loses pays." As a case in point, I saw one of these officers enter Van Damme's inn in order to commandeer the German money, but this man had had the prudence to bury the German money he had received. Among our company were some priests, who had to march at the head and received the most blows. I saw a soldier hold a glass of water to a priest's lips and take it away again when he wished to drink, saying: "It ought to be wine." In the railway carriages there were children, who also went without food and drink. These children were crying and asking for food. At Cologne, after we had been taken back to the train, some ladies from the Red Cross brought bottles of milk for the children. In the carriages there were babies' perambulators and cradles which the mothers had brought, and in which they put the tiny children of a few weeks old.

20. *Deposition of Felix Michiels, Agriculturist, of Corbeek Loo.*

On Wednesday, August 26th last, we were still at Corbeek-Loo, half an hour away from Louvain. We knew that on Tuesday evening the Germans had suffered a reverse, for we had seen some German horses escaping without riders quite near to where we lived. On Tuesday evening a troop of Germans was in camp near my parents' brickfield; we had tried to escape in the night, but scarcely had we left our house when on all sides we heard shots fired and bullets whistling. On Wednesday morning we saw that the fire was breaking out around our house. We took refuge in the *château* of Baron Ernst. At this moment all the houses situated between ours and the Porte de Tirlemont were on fire, in particular the houses of M. Carnoy, M. Michotte, and Mme. Tops. While we were in hiding with Baron Ernst, German soldiers came to get some water, and took my brother Germain and me, as well as some neighbours, away with them: we were led to the brickfield, where we saw François Ravoet shot. This man was incapable of uttering a word. It appears that a blank cartridge had been found on him. There were fifteen of us taken away—all civilians—and among us Van Goidsenhoven, Eugène, Théophile Van den Eynde, and de Parc the butcher. We were led through the village of Kessel-Loo. They had begun by taking our money—150 francs from myself, 56 francs from my brother Germain. Our hands were bound behind our backs. We went through Kessel-Loo and crossed the railway bridge. There we saw some murdered civilians. Further on we saw the Place de la Station in flames, and were led along the Boulevard de Diest. Here German drummers, accompanied by the commissary of police, were going about to warn people that they were to quit their dwellings. The entrance to the Porte de Diest was completely blocked by the ruins, and in the distance were seen the flames from the church of Saint-Pierre. We were conducted by Mont César through Hérent. This village was entirely destroyed. The corpses of civilians were hanging partly out of the windows. These corpses were half burnt. We reached Bueken, where some houses were burning, and were driven into a house where there were fifty or sixty civilians in all, crowded closely together. We were bound together, five of us; we succeeded here in cutting the ropes. (The witness showed his hands; round the wrists were blue bruises; it could be seen plainly that he had been bound.) We remained all night in this house at Bueken. The next morning we were taken to Campenhout, where our guides left us alone; they retired along the bank of the canal and fired on the Belgian outposts. I think they did this under the impression that the Belgians had fired in our direction.

21. *Narrative of Père Schill, of the Society of Jesus.*

About 8 o'clock,* while I was engaged in cleaning my room, a voice sounded in the corridor: "Everyone outside! In one hour the town must be evacuated." Half an hour later we were on the road to Brussels. It was a distressing sight; masses of people were flocking out of the town, some carrying parcels, others escaping with nothing but what they stood up in, others carrying sick persons or small children. I myself was carrying a little creature with bare feet. From time to time we met German sentries, and when we approached them with hands up and waving handkerchiefs, they greeted us with insults—"Schweinepriester! Halunken!—(Pigs of priests! Scoundrels!) You incite the people to fire on us! Das sind die Richtigen!" Other soldiers apologised, saying: "Die Unschuldigen müssen mit den Schuldigen leiden!" (The innocent must suffer with the guilty!) After two hours of wearisome marching, and after safely passing several outposts, we at last reached Tervueren. But we had rejoiced too soon; we suddenly came upon a number of soldiers who barred the way. They stopped us and ordered us to empty our pockets and spread the contents on the ground in the mud. We were all drawn up in line, the soldiers facing us and hurling the usual insults at us: "Schweine," &c. The officer had commanded them to keep off, but no sooner had he turned his back than they rushed on us. The officer sprang upon them, revolver in hand. We were then searched. I unbuttoned the upper

* August 27th, 1914.

part of my cassock, thinking that that would suffice, but the soldier tore it violently open from top to bottom, bursting off all the buttons but one. While he was searching me he tried to slip a cartridge into one of my pockets; fortunately Père X noticed the trick, and informed the officer of it. I do not know whether the soldier was punished.

When they had finished searching us, we were all led into a field alongside the road, and told to sit down on the damp grass while the soldiers mounted guard. We stayed there about an hour, and were joined by monks, priests and nuns, as they arrived from Louvain. We were then placed in two rows along a wooden fence which went across the field. It seemed as if we were going to be shot, so we hung our rosaries round our necks, took our crucifixes in our hands and received absolution from a priest. Two individuals with sinister-looking faces had joined us, how I do not know. However, when one of us asked the officer what was going to happen, he reassured us and told us we had nothing to fear. We were then separated into groups of twenty; my group was placed behind the fence in the other part of the meadow, and we were left in the charge of a kindhearted and honest soldier, who at once allowed some of us to retire for a moment. As soon, however, as the officer noticed it, he rushed up revolver in hand, and abused the soldier violently. "What did I tell you? If anyone stirs, he will be shot. Is this the way you obey my orders?" The soldier was indignant and without saying a word looked the officer straight in the eyes. I was standing close by and witnessed the whole scene.

After some time—I forget how long—we saw Père Dupierreux coming towards us, guarded by two soldiers and followed by another with a paper in his hand. The last-named asked to whom the note belonged; the Father declared it was his. As the soldier demanded an interpreter, I was called upon. But what did I see? The Father had a large cross marked in chalk on his back; he held his crucifix in his hand and looked steadfastly at it. The soldier presented the paper to me and the officer said: "Listen, you will first read this paper in French and then translate it into German. If you omit or add a single word, you will be shot with him." My heart was beating violently; the poor Father was already condemned. What was I to do? If I refused to read the paper there would be two victims; if I read it, the Father would be shot on the spot! The substance of the notes was as follows: "The Germans have invaded Belgium with fire and sword; this horde of barbarians has laid waste the whole country. When Omar destroyed the library at Alexandria, no one thought that such an act of vandalism could be repeated. It has been repeated at Louvain, the library has been destroyed. Such is the *Germanische Kultur* of which they boasted so loudly!"

As I was reading these words, the officer stopped me: "*Genug, ab!*"—(that's enough)—and when some tried to pacify him: "*Kein Wort mehr*" (not another word). Then the Father, who had listened to the reading with perfect calm and presence of mind, asked to receive absolution. This was explained to the officer, who gave permission. After his confession, the Father stood up. The officer gave the command: "*Vorwärts vor die Front!*" Without a moment's hesitation the Father walked forward, his eyes fixed on the crucifix. At about 15 metres from us, the Father stopped at the officer's command. Then four soldiers were summoned and placed themselves between us and the victim. The command rang out: "*Legt an! Feuer!*" We heard only one report; the Father fell on his back, his limbs gave one last shudder. Then the spectators were told to turn away; among them was the twin brother of the victim. The officer bent over the body and discharged his revolver into the ear; the bullet came out of the eye.

The officer then made me translate the following proclamation: "You are coming with us in our carts. When we come to a village, two or three of you will be chosen to go and inform the Burgomaster that he is responsible for the behaviour of his people. If a single shot is fired from a house the whole village will be burnt; you will be shot and the inhabitants with you."

After that we climbed into the carts, trying to find some room to sit down, on planks, sacks of corn, &c. We had among us Mgr. Ladeuze, Rector of Louvain University, and Mgr. de Becker, president of the American Seminary. When we went through Brussels, a crowd of anxious people collected on the Boulevards, wondering what it could all mean. It was not until 8 o'clock at night that we were liberated, thanks to the intervention of the Father Superior of the Province.

22. *Deposition of M. Jules Kockx, Curate of Sainte Gertrude, at Louvain.*

I was caught by the Germans in the Chaussée d'Aerschot, on Friday, August 28th, 1914, as I was fleeing from Louvain. There was a large number of people, already prisoners, with me. I was searched and my baggage examined, on the pretext that I had a revolver. I was wearing the priest's habit. They made me walk before the prisoners, who were surrounded by 16 soldiers of the 162nd infantry regiment. We were insulted, and were led into those streets in Louvain where there were the most horrors and the most corpses to be seen. We arrived at the cavalry riding school, where we were shut up with several thousand people. I still had two soldiers near me; they went away at last at about 7 o'clock. In this riding school, two women went mad and two infants of a few months old died. We were fed on little German biscuits.

Next morning they came and said to us: "You are all free, because Antwerp has fallen. King Albert dines to-day in Berlin, and we shall sup this evening in Paris. The English ports have been bombarded and we have been victorious. Namur has surrendered and we have captured an army of 125,000 men."

The Germans assert that the priests preached active resistance to the people. With the same idea in mind, Saint-Pierre was burnt, because they asserted that there were in the church 49 refugees with 3,000 rifles. On leaving the riding school, we were put in rows of four, women, children and men, and taken systematically wherever there was the most destruction, carnage, and other horrors. I am certain that at the start there was a mistake and that the German troops fired on one another. I saw in my street some runaway horses.

Escorted by the 53rd infantry regiment, we were marched between Louvain and Hérent, where I saw numbers of charred corpses. The command was given to stop us each time there was a particularly terrifying spectacle to be seen. Other witnesses could affirm the same. At Hérent the prisoners were sorted. The women and children were separated from the men and sent away. The old men were driven in the direction of Louvain, and then the men of 40 to 60 years of age were set aside. I do not know what became of them; I believe they remained at Campenhout. The men under 40 were taken in the direction of Malines. When they were close to Malines they were liberated and told: "March straight on without turning—the first who turns round will be shot."

We reached Malines and found it deserted. On the way one of the prisoners, M. Léon van Hove, professor at Louvain University, gave out. At this moment, Gross, the commanding officer, said: "This is your doing; if you had not fired on us all this would not have happened." He expressed himself in a jargon of broken French, German or Flemish.

The Catholic soldiers showed no respect for my priest's habit. They said to me, "We, too, are Catholics, but you are pigs and black devils." It was near the bridge of Campenhout that the soldiers left us to ourselves. From Malines towards Waelhem the sentries at the fort fired on us. It was night-time. We passed the night at Malines, at the Police Station. Next morning, at 4.30, the Belgians came to meet us.

During the whole march we were not given anything to eat with the exception of the German biscuits in the riding-school, and we had nothing to drink

23. *Deposition of M. X., Doctor of Law at Louvain.*

On Tuesday, August 25th, at about 7.45 p.m., I heard the first shots fired, from the direction of the Porte de Malines.

At about 8.30, and later at about 11.30, a fusillade broke out not far from my house, from the direction of the Vieux Marché and the Grand' Place. I observed some explosions in the air over my head, as if small rockets were going off. Experts might be able to explain this phenomenon; I can hardly believe it could have been rifle shots.

At about 12.30 at night I ventured into the street and went to the Vieux Marché, where I had seen incendiary fires burning since before midnight. On the north-west side of the square (the upper part) all the houses except four or five, starting from the Mont du Collège were on fire, including the shop and the two houses under the Halles. It was not until about 1 or 1.30 that I saw the fire in that part of the Halles which contained the University Library. The first flames were just coming up from the roof. On the south-east of the Vieux Marché two or three houses at the side of the Mont des Anges were also burning.

At the corner of the Rue Courte and the Vieux Marché there were three corpses of civilians lying in the street.

When I came into the Vieux Marché, a section of German soldiers—about fifteen, I think—were engaged in extinguishing the fire in the houses on the lower side of the square. They had ladders and fire-hose. Other soldiers were walking about in the square with their rifles under their arms. There were also some sixty citizens who were endeavouring to check the flames near the Mont du Collège. They were using pails, in default of more suitable apparatus.

At about 1.30 or 2 o'clock I asked a German non-commissioned officer for leave to go to the dépôt of the Public Health Department of the town, situated at the Canal, to fetch the street-watering appliances. The officer agreed, and sent me with an escort of another non-commissioned officer and four soldiers. We went by the Rue Courte, the Grand' Place (where there were a good many soldiers, most of them sitting on the pavements), the Rue de Diest and the Rue du Canal (where we passed close to a picket in the Rue des Poissonniers).

When we reached the Canal we found ourselves suddenly confronted by a large group of civilians, who were seized with panic at the arrival of German soldiers. At my request the soldiers stopped and let me go forward alone to calm the citizens and induce them to return to their homes.

While I was at the Public Health Department dépôt the soldiers who, as they had told me, had only arrived at Louvain that night and would have preferred to go to sleep, returned alone to the town. Hence it was impossible for me to return home. I remained at the Canal until morning, taking shelter in a café every time German troops went past.

On two separate occasions, at 4.30 and at 5.15 on Wednesday morning, one of the sentries at the door of the Saint Martin Barracks in the Rue Minckeleers fired on a group of civilians who were standing peaceably in the Rue du Canal, opposite the Rue Minckeleers. I estimate the distance between the Rue du Canal and the door of the Saint Martin Barracks at about 200 metres. Some persons declare that the sentries, before firing, signed to these people to withdraw.

On Wednesday, August 26th, about 1 p.m., a police officer, accompanied by German drummers, came into the street to read a proclamation which, among other things, summoned the Civic Guard to appear, without uniform, at 2 o'clock at the Saint Martin Barracks. I obeyed the summons, but arrived a little late and joined the Civic Guard at the Town Hall, whither it had been brought from the Saint Martin Barracks. At the Town Hall we were informed that we were prisoners, and we were taken to the station. There were ninety-five of us, including two drummers.

With regard to this point, it may be useful to point out that, according to what I was told, the order to arrest the Civic Guard of Louvain had arrived from the Ortskommandant as early as Monday, the 24th. MM. Emile Schmit, Eugène Verstraeten, and Jules Kleyntjens, of Louvain, can supply information on the point.

After standing some time at the station we were sent off at about 4 o'clock in two luggage vans provided with seats. The train left at about 6.30 p.m., reached Tirlemont at 8 o'clock, and left again at 4 o'clock on Thursday morning.

On the journey we were given food on Friday morning, and in the evening we were given some soup.

It is true that in most of the vans that made up our train the soldiers who were guarding us had disobeyed the orders given them, and had distributed some bread and butter which they received at almost all the stations from ladies of the Red Cross. In the van I was in the soldiers even gave us a loaf. We were also generally given water when we asked for a drink. On the other hand, it is to be noted that we sometimes suffered absolutely brutal treatment. I think it was at Cologne, for instance, that a lady of the Red Cross replied brutally "*Nein*" to Mme. Jules Kleyntjens of Louvain, who asked her for "*Ein wenig Milch für mein krankes Kind von 14 Monaten.*" One of the soldiers who was in charge of the van was himself so disgusted by this that he went to the canteen at the station to ask for some milk for himself, which he gave to Mme. Kleyntjens.

It is unnecessary to add that during the journey insults were heaped upon us both by soldiers and civilians. Actually, in the neighbourhood of Landen, while I was at the door of our van satisfying a natural want with the permission of our guards, and getting a few moments of fresh air, a German soldier who was passing in a train going towards Louvain struck me in the face with his fist. Fortunately, the blow only grazed me.

We were taken out at Münster in the night of Friday to Saturday, August 28th to 29th, a little before midnight.

Besides the Civic Guard of Louvain, about 250 persons of the Louvain district formed part of those sent off; one hundred of them consisted of women and children, and the civic guard of Grimberghen and Beyghem. The women and the children up to the age of ten to eleven were lodged in the village of Münster in a barn. Madame Jules Kleyntjens and Jean Kleyntjens will give full details on this subject. I merely add that they were able to leave Münster on September 26th.

Over 300 of the men were lodged in the camp of Münster in the Stallbaracke 1A.

All classes of society, all professions and all ages, from eleven or twelve up to eighty years, were represented.

This Stallbaracke 1A was a wooden shed covered only with tarred cardboard, serving in ordinary times for the housing of cavalry, men and horses. On the floor there was straw, both in the two "chief rooms" (Kopfstuben) where the men generally sleep and in the actual stables. It was on this straw that we slept.

The straw had already been used for a fortnight by Belgian soldiers when we arrived; it was still being used when I left on October 30th.

As regards blankets, we had about one for every two persons. All these blankets had been used, and not one had been disinfected or washed. Many of them were thin and worn out. A little later they distributed a few blankets now and again, so that at the end of October there was almost one apiece. This was quite insufficient, and most of our companions complained bitterly of cold, especially on bright nights.

Fire and light were unknown luxuries.

For food we received one loaf for three people every other day. It seemed that this loaf was supposed to weigh 6 lbs. People accustomed to judge weights decided that they weighed less.

At 6 o'clock in the morning we were given a soup ladle of coffee, and at 11 o'clock a ladle of soup. This soup was generally made of meat or bacon (sometimes of doubtful quality), of potatoes and also of white cabbage or peas, carrots, beans, turnip-tops, or rice, etc. About 5 o'clock in the evening a ladle-full of coffee, tea or cocoa; sometimes also (on an average of once in five or six days) we were given a piece of cheese, sausage or bacon, but in this case nothing to drink.

The food was quite insufficient for the great majority. This is proved decisively by the fact that from September 19th, when we were able to buy victuals at the canteen, we bought not only cheese, margarine, sugar, bacon, etc., but bread as well.

So much bread was demanded that the canteen was unable to obtain sufficient at Münster, nor could it in consequence execute the orders, and had to have whole cartloads of bread sent from Hanover. I had the opportunity, moreover, of explaining the state of affairs to an officer, to some quartermasters, and to some non-commissioned officers, and of telling them plainly that the majority of us were suffering from hunger. Not one of them ventured to contradict me.

From the point of view of health and cleanliness, the situation was as a rule the antithesis of what it should have been. We never received from the German authorities any clothing, shoes, linen or towels. It was not until about the middle of October that they gave us, on two separate occasions, a little soap (for a distribution of soap, in the proportion of one cake to twenty persons, which was made on September 10th, really does not count). Fortunately we were able to buy soap from the beginning.

The majority of the prisoners had been taken absolutely unawares, and had only what they stood up in at the moment of their arrest. Some of them were in slippers or even without shoes of any kind; others were in shirt sleeves, or linen waistcoats.

From the middle of September, we were able to buy underlinen, clothes, and shoes.

Both as regards food and clothing, the situation became fairly tolerable for those who had money; but with many of us this was not the case, either because they were poor or because at the moment of their arrest they had no money on them. This deplorable situation could be but imperfectly remedied by charity; most of those who had money had only modest sums at their disposal, and in face of the uncertainty as to the duration of our captivity, they could not give lavishly. However, some of our charitable companions had provided for the most urgent needs of those who were without money; they bought shirts, drawers, sabots, bread, etc., for them.

The majority had neither cupboard nor box to keep the bread in. It was, therefore, exposed to the dust, insects, etc. It was only by degrees that they succeeded in obtaining either a cardboard box or a piece of paper or a wooden case, etc. Moreover, before being distributed, the bread was brought in open carts, and generally remained for several hours outside on some coverings.

The occupants of Stallbaracke 1A were able to communicate with the occupants of Stallbaracken I. II., III., and IV. In these sheds there were about 400 Russians, nearly all students of Liège University, 600 to 700 inhabitants of Visé, the Civic Guards of Hasselt and Tongres, some inhabitants of Haccourt and of several of the communes of Limburg, a few English, French, etc., arrested in Germany, etc., in all about 1,700 persons. In other parts of the camp there were about 600 to 800 other civilians, several hundreds of the inhabitants of Wesemael and the neighbouring communes, some inhabitants of Glons apparently, and the Civic Guard of Saint Trond, etc.

I may add in passing that according to the German military there were about 25,000 military prisoners in the Münster Camp, all Belgians, and from 1,000 to 2,000 French and English.

For the five Stallbaracken there were two pits in the place of water-closets, and in front of these pits some ledges. Behind and at each side there were wooden partitions; on the side towards the sheds the closets were absolutely open, so that we were exposed to the public.

The 1,700 persons occupying the five barracks of our square had at their disposal, at first, two large flat spaces of 1 hectare to 1½ hectares each, on one of which stood the five sheds, and on the other nothing at all. From September 15th we were forbidden access to the second because new huts were being built there.

I omit certain other facts, of a more delicate nature, such as the danger of infection owing to the presence in the square of cases of tuberculosis, syphilis and scurvy. Doctors Maldague and Meulemans, Professors of Louvain, will be able to furnish edifying details. I may add that certain sheds were infested with large lice.

As to religious matters, we had an opportunity to attend Mass on September 30th, and October 10th, 20th, and 30th. On October 9th and 29th the chaplain of the camp came to hear confessions. The priests who were imprisoned with us were never able to say Mass. I may mention in passing that they left Münster on October 17th, and were then interned at Celle.

The civilians taken prisoners in Belgium had been marked on the chest and back with the words "*Kriegsgefangener Münster*" painted in white on their clothing.

We had no work nor occupation of any kind, nor anything to read. We passed our time in sleeping, talking, playing, and making very primitive objects and utensils; from October 3rd we could smoke, except inside the sheds; from the month of October, lectures, etc., were frequently organised. On October 30th the chaplain gave us four or five books to be read aloud to the assembled prisoners.

As for the behaviour of the German military to us, they considered us as *francs-tireurs* and as assassins, and treated us accordingly. Insults, threats, blows, etc., were not spared us; not even the old men escaped. The effect of the harsh treatment, privation and distress was such that at the beginning several went quite out of their minds. The consequences of this for the group of Wesemael people were tragic, and cost several their lives. It would be well to interrogate the people of this group.

Gradually, however, it was perceived that we were by no means ruffians, and the treatment became less harsh by degrees.

In this respect, it is to be remarked that in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of October 4th, 1914, No. 509, under the signature "*der kommandierende General von Linden-Inden*" of Hanover (I believe this is the General commanding the 10th Army Corps) the following appears: "*Es ist unzutreffend dass die in Münster-Lager befindlichen zahlreichen Belgischen Gefangenen auf unsere Soldaten geschossen haben; nur bei zwei Gefangenen liegt ein solcher Verdacht vor. Ebenso unrichtig ist es dass bei ihnen bei der Einlieferung noch abgeschnittene Finger mit Ringen vorgefunden sind.*"*

* Translation: "It is incorrect that the numerous Belgian prisoners in the Münster Camp fired on our soldiers: such a suspicion only attaches to two of the prisoners. It is equally untrue that at the time when they were brought here, severed fingers with rings on them were found in their possession."

On October 18th the Civic Guard of Hasselt was released ; some urchins of 12 or 14 years were allowed to go at the same time.

On October 30th those over 70 years of age and some of the cripples were allowed to go—but not all : thus one man (of 50, I think) with a wooden leg had to remain in Münster.

We left at 1.30 p.m. on October 30th, and reached Louvain on Sunday, November 1st, at one in the morning.

The journey was made in 3rd class carriages, and we were properly fed on the way. Perhaps, this was done purposely, in order to leave a good impression on us at the last. At Haltern, a soldier (an officer, if I remember rightly) said to me : “ *Prahlen Sie nun in Belgien wie gut Sie hier behandelt worden sind !* ”*

24. Report transmitted on September 26th, 1914, by Mr. X., Advocate, of Louvain.

The entry of the German troops into the town of Louvain took place on Wednesday, August 19th, at 1.30 p.m.

The troops were preceded for several hours by the fugitive countryfolk who had been driven out of their homes by fire and sword.

In the streets leading to the Portes de Diest and de Tirlemont was an unbroken line of vehicles, and in them sat these unhappy people in the midst of their hastily snatched-up garments : there were people of all ages, from the old grandmother to the mother with her latest baby at her breast.

From the station district the fire was seen raging on the hill of Loo, and lighting up the horizon in a glowing circle.

The first German riflemen came into the streets ; there were six of them on each pavement, watching the street and the houses with a suspicious eye, carrying their rifles in hunting fashion. An officer on horseback followed them. The streets emptied at this impressive arrival. There was no resistance ; then the advance guard appeared, and then the Great General Staff of the first army in motor cars.

A *parlementaire* preceded them, guarded by six soldiers, who stood on the steps of the motor with fixed bayonets. He required M. Colins the Burgomaster and Alderman Vanderkelen to accompany him to reconnoitre the bridges. Then the parleying began as to the conditions of the occupation. Either they would have to pay 200,000 francs a day or else feed the troops.

M. Colins, M. Vanderkelen, and another Alderman, M. Schmit, were taken as hostages, and imprisoned in the Town Hall guarded by sentries.

After three days, other hostages were substituted successively for them : the Rector of the University, Mgr. Ladenze, the senior parish priest M. Ceulemans, the Vice-President of the tribunal, M. Debruyne, Justice Maes, and other leading citizens.

The General Head Quarters was installed at the Law Courts, the Staff at the Hôtel de Suède and the Hôtel Britannique.

For four days the German troops defiled without cessation by three different routes, proceeding in the direction of Brussels.

Considerable requisitions of bread, meat, and other food supplies were made, but especially of wine. Ten thousand bottles here, thirty casks there, were requisitioned. Their demands in the matter of wine were continual : they must have been afflicted with an insatiable thirst.

This unquenchable thirst of the German soldier will be an unforgettable characteristic of this campaign. The troops smashed the doors of many unoccupied houses and pillaged the cellars. The private residences in the Rue Léopold and the Place du Peuple, in the rich quarter, were devastated, and this under the eyes of the Great General Staff. The latter cannot pretend ignorance. A number of houses close to the Head Quarters bear outward signs of having been broken into ; for example, there is a large gaping hole in the outer door of the house belonging to the former Burgomaster of Louvain, the late M. Vital Decoster—a house which adjoins the Palais de Justice, where the Head Quarters Staff was lodged.

Among the houses pillaged was that of M. van Gehuchten, the famous Professor of the University, known to the whole world, and particularly in the German Universities, for his fine works on the anatomy of the nervous system. This pillage aroused intense indignation ; it was brought to the notice of the German General, who seemed very much annoyed by it, but ordered no measure of protection.

The pillage of private cellars continued ; the soldiers were not ashamed to drink in the street the contents of the bottles they stole, and drunken soldiers were constantly met with.

On Saturday, the 22nd, at mid-day, whilst a battalion of infantry was bivouacking in the main street of the town, a soldier put on in public an opera-hat stolen from Professor van Gehuchten, under the eyes of officers who permitted the scandal.

On Friday, August 21st, the General in command had a proclamation posted, written in German and barbarous French, which threatened to destroy towns and villages where civilians had fired on the troops ; and which added that some of the inhabitants had already been accused of committing acts “ of the most gruesome (*lugubre*) cruelty ” (*sic*). Experts in typography declared that these notices had been printed in Germany. Further, *mayors* were mentioned in them.

The conclusion may reasonably be drawn from these statements that these notices had been prepared in advance in view of the invasion of French territory ; and proof may be seen in them

* Translation : “ Go and tell them in Belgium how well you have been treated here.”

that the Germans, before crossing the frontier, had conceived the project of inventing so-called attacks by the civil population in order to justify the systematic destruction of villages and towns which they were about criminally to commit.

On Saturday, August 22nd, the General Head Quarters removed to Brussels, leaving the 3rd battalion of the 53rd Infantry Regiment of Landwehr to act as garrison.

The utmost calm prevailed without interruption until the fatal night of Tuesday, the 25th—Wednesday, 26th (August), during which the soldiers abandoned themselves without cause to the sacking of the town.

A painful incident, however, occurred on the night of Monday, which may be related as a sample of the scorn professed by the German officers for the principle of authority. A commanding officer arrived at the station, and being unable to obtain from the Burgomaster of the town the immediate delivery of two hundred mattresses, sent for the magistrate and overwhelmed him with abuse. This odious behaviour remained unpunished.

The people of Louvain never ceased to show the greatest courtesy to the German soldiers, who expressed their appreciation of it. The inhabitants submitted with a good grace to the obligations imposed on them by the necessities of war; they had generously lodged a number of officers and soldiers, giving them food and shelter without stint.

The communal authorities also had been unremitting in giving wise advice, as is usual in such circumstances, and had even exceeded their duty.

They had laid particular emphasis on the command to abstain from all attack upon the hostile troops, under pain of the most severe penalties. The Public Prosecutor added his entreaties to those of the Burgomaster in a proclamation posted upon the walls.

In reality there was not a single inhabitant of Louvain who had not been informed, as much by the publicity given to the events of Tongres and Aerschot as by the orders of the authorities, of the danger to which he would expose the whole town by molesting a German soldier.

It is well to state also that before the arrival of the Germans the population had hastened to lay down the weapons in its possession.

It was then that the military authorities announced that, in recognition of the goodwill and moderation of the inhabitants, they would in future cease to demand fresh hostages.

* * *

It can be affirmed with absolute certainty that this act of destruction was performed by virtue of a superior command.

Insufficiently informed persons have tried to attribute the sack of Louvain to events of secondary importance, such as the disorderly return of conquered troops into Hérent, and the error of German soldiers who took these troops for the French, or else to a mutiny among German soldiers. These incidents are supposed to have led the Germans first to fire on their own troops and then to destroy the town and massacre the inhabitants.

* * *

We must now examine into the cause assigned for this criminal destruction by the German military authorities—namely, the fact of the inhabitants of the town having fired on the German troops. The accusation has become official, for it was made by the German Emperor in his telegram to President Wilson.

It had, moreover, been stated more precisely by the officers of the garrison, who said that it was Belgian soldiers disguised as civilians who had fired on the German troops.

This definite statement emanates therefore from a competent authority, from the only authority in a position to produce legal evidence. This evidence takes on an added value owing to the fact that it was given at once, and so at a time when it was not suspect.

As to the intrinsic value of this allegation, it will be well to weigh the following arguments which nullify it:—

1. Its improbability, considering the absence of sufficient motive. In view of the enormous disproportion between the small advantage to be derived—namely, the death of a few German soldiers—and, on the other hand, the tremendous repression that would follow—namely, the immediate and complete annihilation of the detachment of marksmen, followed by the destruction of the town—it must be concluded that the idea of such an undertaking could only have been conceived by a party of madmen.

2. Its impossibility. The formation of these so-called detachments would only have been possible with the authorisation of the Belgian military authorities, and at the same time with the complicity of numerous inhabitants of Louvain, who were strictly warned by the threats contained in the notice of the German General as well as by the proclamations of the Belgian authorities. The idea of the complicity of such numbers of people is manifestly absurd.

The practical realisation of such an undertaking was, moreover, rendered impossible by material obstacles—namely the constant watching of the streets by German forces of considerable numbers, which made it impossible for arms to be transported, and the watching of the houses during the visits made by the numberless German soldiers who were received as lodgers.

3. The absence of all actual proof of the carrying out of the alleged operations. In fact, the German authorities have never produced any statement nor given any accurate account of the German soldiers who are supposed to have perished, nor of the disguised Belgians who are said to have been captured or killed after firing, nor of dates and places. The most ordinary

common sense points to the fact that if the pretended attacks were real, there would have been what is called "*flagrant délit, clameur publique, and corps de délit*, but nothing of the kind existed.

4. The contradiction between the German version and the actual facts witnessed.

The sack of Louvain began on Tuesday, August 25th, at 8.10 p.m., that is to say immediately after nightfall. Now, until this exact moment, no report of fire-arms was heard anywhere within the limits of the town, nor was any hostile demonstration seen. Moreover, it has been affirmed by numerous witnesses, on the most irrefutable evidence, that at the aforesaid exact moment German detachments began a simultaneous and methodical fusillade, of great violence, in every quarter of the town at once, which fusillade lasted throughout almost the whole night, and threw the population into wild panic.

Immediately after beginning these alarming operations the Germans lighted incendiary fires simultaneously in numerous buildings: in the University Halls, in the Church of Saint Pierre, in the "La Royale" tavern, in the Café des Brasseurs, in numbers of other dwelling-places in the Rue de la Station, the Place du Peuple, Rue Léopold, Rue de Manège, etc. These operations had been preceded by a strong concentration of troops under a mounted officer in the square known as the "Vieux Marché." This officer was heard by witnesses to inform his men of the order for destruction. A group of officers in motor-cars, whose actions and gestures seemed to show that they were directing the operations, had likewise formed in the Place du Peuple at the beginning.

It is apparent that all this concerted labour, performed with such despatch, such method, and so simultaneously, cannot be reconciled with the hypothesis of attacks made on the German military, even in numerous streets of the town, just as daylight was disappearing.

Another material proof. Many inhabitants braved the danger and cautiously observed the nocturnal operations of the troops in the streets. They were able to observe that the Germans, to put people off the scent, had arranged a clumsy trick, which consisted in organising sham fights between different sections of detachments, so as to give plausibility to the fable of a series of attacks by detachments of Belgian soldiers, disguised as civilians, on German troops—an absurd fable that convinced nobody.

All measures had, however, been taken to get rid of the inquisitive. A terrific fusillade had entirely cleared the streets; and any inquisitive person found at the window was at once shot. Such was the sad fate that overtook the bailiff Heerenaer, in the Rue des Brasseurs, and Mlle. Goemans, an old lady of independent means, in the Rue de la Lei.

We believe that this evidence is conclusive. We await the details that the Germans may care to supply in proof of the contrary.

If the slightest doubt still existed, it would be removed by the evidence of a notary's wife, who, after receiving some officers at her house and treating them well, was given by her guests, at 7 p.m., as a token of goodwill, the advice to quit the town immediately, as terrible things were about to take place.

Let us take up the thread of our narrative once more. Many inhabitants driven out of their homes by the fire were struck down in the street. In the Rue de Bruxelles the Sisters at the hospital picked up 18 unburied corpses, which they interred in the hospital garden.

The bodies of 21 victims, whom the Germans had thrown into the cellars of some premises under construction at the corner of the Boulevard de Tirlemont, were found a week after these events. Numbers of other corpses were picked up on the Boulevard, at the Canal, and in other parts of the town. Five corpses buried in the Station square, among them the bodies of three proprietors of neighbouring cafés, Frans van Mol, Kempeneers, and Struyf, were exhumed on the following Monday.

Many of the citizens who escaped on this fateful night were exposed to fire, and were only able to escape at the gravest risk.

To give an idea of the mad terror that seized the inhabitants, we will mention the fact that part of the population of the parish of the Dominicans sought refuge in the River Dyle, under a bridge.

The fury with which the German soldiers performed their deeds of violence was such that several brick façades of houses in the Rue des Joyeuses-Entrées were completely cut up by the fire of the machine-guns.

The *Enfant-Jésus* field hospital is in this street. This refuge was broken into and the German soldiers, after over-running the premises, pursued the Doctors Aerts and Ausloos with rifle shots, and forced them to seek refuge in the cellars.

The marks of two discharges of shot are still to be seen on the walls of the façade.

At the house of M. Verleysen a woman in labour was killed by a bullet in the head during her removal. M. Verleysen deposited the corpse on the ground and fled with his children. When he returned he found the body of his wife with the skull fractured. He had to bury her in his garden.

When the day broke on this scene of horror, a tremendous exodus of the inhabitants took place in all directions. The unhappy people walked along quickly and timidly, with arms raised, and were stopped at the crossroads by the guard and searched.

At the Canal, several other civilians were struck down, in particular the hairdresser Armée, a Dutch subject, and his son. . . .

During the days that followed, until the Monday of the week after, there reigned in the streets a silence as of the grave, only broken by the barking of hungry dogs.

Thus was the vindictiveness of the Germans appeased.

But, in order to complete this narrative, it is necessary to report certain instructive episodes which will give a clearer idea of German barbarity and of the motives actuating it.

In the course of this fatal night, an officer escorted by thirty soldiers went to inquire for Alderman Schmit at his house, and took him to the square which is at the corner of the Rue Juste-Lipse and the Rue Léopold. The officer, pointing to the corpse of a Hussar, made an impassioned speech to the soldiers, ending as follows: "It was from this house" (pointing to the house of M. David Fischbach) that the fatal shot was fired. The blood of the whole population of Louvain cannot pay for the blood of this German soldier." He then raised the corpse, which was probably the body of a soldier killed during the Hérent engagement, for it was already stiff. At these words, the soldiers uttered shouts of vengeance and bore down on M. David Fischbach's house; they smashed in the shutters and threw in lighted incendiary materials. The house filled with smoke. The Alderman was led to the station and did not witness the conclusion of the drama, but when he came back again the body of M. David, a kind, harmless old man, and that of his son Léon were lying upon the ground.

The German officer assured the Alderman before leaving that the town ought to induce King Albert to yield.

Other innocent citizens suffered the same fate as M. David, and were massacred in their homes.

A witness saw German soldiers throw into the flaming ruins of the notary Brion's house the old man whose business it was to look after this residence.

The destruction of the town was an opportunity for the German soldiers to abandon themselves to a series of robberies by force of arms.

Numbers of people were brutally driven from their homes, but more especially, it is to be noticed, in the rich quarters. Then the soldiers at once fell on packages, bags, or reticules which they knew contained valuable objects. Such was the case especially with Mme. Théodore Mertens, living in the Rue de la Station, whose reticule contained precious stones, very valuable brilliants, gold, and a bundle of 1,000-franc notes. A soldier cut the strings of her purse, so that nothing remained in her hand but the handle of the precious bag. She was also forbidden to bring help to her husband, who had been shot in the shoulder; she was brutally separated from him.

On the days following this tragic night, the German soldiers continued their incendiarism.

It is to be noted that the fires were not caused by the bombardment. The Germans fired artillery at night, doubtless in order to mislead people. The fires were lighted methodically from house to house.

Their favourite device was a special projectile, fired by means of rifles through the windows, which must have contained, it is supposed, the rocket used by the troops to give light during night engagements. This contrivance may have been used without excluding the use of grenades, benzine, and other things of the sort.

The soldiers, led by a non-commissioned officer, went from house to house, smashing in the shop fronts and doors of the houses with their rifles. A barrow or cart for carrying off the booty stood in the street.

Sometimes the removal of the goods was carried on with the co-operation of an officer.

Some safes were plundered, notably that belonging to M. Thaon, a Treasury official, which was thrown down and broken open.

25. *Report of M. Bruylants, Professor at Louvain University, President of the Belgian Academy of Medicine.*

I have examined fairly closely into these crimes, and, in full possession of my faculties, interrogated some of those who perpetrated them as to their causes.

Vieux Marché.—On the evening of August 25th I heard on several occasions the noise of a fairly sustained fusillade which seemed to me to be very close; it was repeated in the course of the night. I then became aware of the glow of fires whose locality appeared to be in the neighbourhood of the station, at different points in the Rue de la Station, and later in the Vieux Marché.

Several times, very early in the morning of the 26th, I went to this square; the first time was at about 4 o'clock. I thought then that the whole place was on fire and wished to see for myself and estimate the exact extent of the disaster, which concerned me very closely.

I discovered that the whole of the Rue des Récollets as well as the Rue de Paris was intact.

When I arrived at the Vieux Marché a sentry was posted at the top of the Mont des Marbres. I asked him in German for permission to go to the square, on the pretext that I had relatives there about whose fate I was anxious.

I was able thus to get gradually as far up as the Rue Kraeke. I observed that the end houses on each side of the three blocks on the east of the Vieux Marché were on fire, with the exception of those skirting the Mont du Collège. The house at the right-hand corner of the Rue Kraeke was on fire; the conflagration was spreading to the houses higher up in this street, and was threatening the Institut de Théologie et de Droit, of Spoelberch.

The fire must have spread some time before to the University Halles. Several houses on the western side (the block next the Rue Courte) were also in flames.

I accosted a soldier standing near me, and asked him: "What did the occupants of these houses do, then?" Reply: "They fired on us. We have had several killed and many wounded: The innocent must suffer for the guilty." "Where did they fire from?" "From there," he replied, pointing to the Halles of the University, which building is never occupied on that side, and where there is not a soul during the vacations. Like the sentry posted on the Mont des Marbres, this man smelt of gin.

I returned a second time to the Vieux Marché, at about 5 o'clock, accompanied by a workman who in his hasty flight from his home at Mont du Collège had forgotten a small sum of money and dared not venture alone into his house.

I asked a non-commissioned officer who was crouching on the ground, packing up something in a grey blanket, which he seemed anxious not to show me: "May this man go into his house to get something he has forgotten?" "*Natürlich!*" he replied, and we passed.

Leaving my man to look for what he wanted, I went past the Mont du Collège and down the Rue de Namur, stopping in the Rue des Cordes, where several houses were on fire. Some police officers of Louvain, armed with hoses, were deluging the premises of Peeters' printing works. They were in a fair way to putting out the fire. A sentry demanded roughly what I was doing there, and I replied as before: "I have some relatives here and am anxious about their fate." The soldier replied: "All the inhabitants of this street are at the Town Hall; you can go there." I took good care not to follow this advice.

Retracing my steps by the Rue de Namur and the Mont du Collège, I stopped at the entrance to the Collège des Joséphites, where several persons were standing. Near the door of the college, on the pavement of the Mont du Collège, was the corpse of a German soldier with a blanket or military cloak thrown over it.

Below the open space which leads up to the college entrance there were some cartridge-cases. I picked some up (as I did later at the foot of the Mont des Marbres in the Rue de Paris), wishing to find out the kind of cartridges they were. An inhabitant of Louvain asked me what I was trying to find out. At my reply he said: "It is useless to make researches of that kind; you will find none but German cartridges; there are no others; these people have killed one another; they fired from the Rue Courte towards the college and *vice-versa*. There is one corpse here and another near the Rue Courte."

I saw the first but not the second.

All the cartridge-cases I picked up were German. I returned a little later (about 6 o'clock) to the Vieux Marché for the third time. My arrival was greeted by a shot. The Halles were completely in flames. The Library was ablaze. As I was standing near the door of the Collège des Joséphites an innkeeper from the Vieux Marché said to me: "I have just this moment discovered under my billiard table a dead German soldier. I don't know how the thing could have happened; my window is smashed."

I advised the good man to flee without going home again; his house must have been in the block opposite the Rue Kraeke.

The scene that was enacted in the Vieux Marché is thus easy to reconstruct.

Some soldiers were scattered about the square or in the public-houses. Did a quarrel arise? Possibly, for many of them must have been drunk. I have mentioned above that their breath was foul.

Did they take fright at a rifle shot fired in mistake by one of them, as is popularly believed?

They must have fallen back then, sniping at one another, some in the direction of the Rue Courte, others in that of the college. One of the latter fell and was removed under cover at the side of the college entrance; another *is said to have been killed* near the Rue Courte.

The man whose body *was found under the billiard table* by the publican probably was trying to cross the square; he came into the range of the fire and fell mortally wounded through the window of the *cabaret*.

The inhabitants of the Vieux Marché are small retail shop-keepers, peaceful and rather timid. They were already growing accustomed to the presence of the Germans, who for several days had been billeted in large numbers in the Place du Collège and in the Collège des Joséphites; the latter alone sheltered 1,000 men and 100 horses every night.

In the square itself there were nearly always various vehicles moving about. I often saw many of the inhabitants among the soldiers, selling them dainties, bread, groceries and beer.

An inquiry would at once have established the innocence of the population, but the non-commissioned officers, fearing to be held responsible for the disturbance, preferred to believe the word of their men when, in order to exculpate themselves, they accused the people of Louvain of firing on them.

Boulevards de Tirlemont.—Being unable to reach these parts on Wednesday, I went there on Thursday, the 27th, at about 6 a.m., going by the Vieux Marché, the Mont du Collège, the Rues de Namur, de Saint-Michel, du Maieur, de la Monnaie and de Tirlemont.

During this tour I only saw burned down houses in the Rue de Paris and the Vieux Marché; here three little houses along the Mont du Collège, as well as a part of the block that lies between the Mont des Trois Angés and the Mont des Marbres, had escaped the fire.

As I passed the Marché aux Grains I noticed that M. Gilbert's house, at the corner of the Rue des Joyeuses Entrées and the Place du Peuple, had been burnt. On approaching a little nearer I saw that the same thing had happened on the whole of that side of the Place du Peuple. The damage had, alas, been even more extensive.

In the Chaussée de Tirlemont the very large number of houses occupied by small employés, people of small private means, and little retail tradesmen, had their doors and windows smashed by the butts of rifles. Only the first house on the left next to the gate had been burnt. The Germans on the Thursday and Friday pillaged all these houses and set fire to them after the expulsion of the inhabitants of Louvain.

Quite near here on the boulevard a sentry was guarding the corpses of two civilians, "who," he said, "had fired." I continued my conversation with this man. Perceiving that the house of Professor R— bore deep traces of shrapnel I asked the reason for this. "It was not done on purpose. This house and those next it were occupied by honest people. But they fired on us from that one." He pointed with his finger to the house which forms the corner of the Rue des Joyeuses Entrées and the boulevard, and which was absolutely riddled with grapeshot. The man was lying. The house in question was occupied by an old couple— G—, who were quite incapable of any hostile act.

I then went on a little further in the direction of the station, and stopped by a group of twenty houses, recently constructed and situated in the commune of Kessel-Loo, in a locality known as the Outer Boulevard de Tirlemont.

Seventeen of these houses were burnt, the three others, occupied by M. N—, professor of the Faculty of Medicine and doctor at the Red Cross Hospital Saint-Thomas, of Dutch extraction, by M. K—, and by M. J—, corn-broker, a very old man, seemed to have escaped destruction; I learned later that they had been thoroughly plundered or entirely ransacked, and that in one of them, the house of M. N—, some women had been wounded by the German bullets, and that the Germans had twice attempted to set fire to it.

The sentry on duty there, who was likewise guarding the corpses of some civilians, and whom I asked "what the occupants of these houses had done to be subjected to such treatment," replied in the traditional manner, most probably learnt by rote: "They fired on us; we have several dead and many wounded; the innocent had to be punished with the guilty."

Five only of the twenty houses were inhabited: the three I have mentioned above and two others, whose occupants were M. M—, Professor at the Faculty of Medicine and member of the Red Cross Hospital that was fitted up and directed by M. D—, and M. L—, architect and professor at the technical schools, who was assassinated by the German soldiers. It is unnecessary to say that none of these people dreamt of firing a single shot.

On the other hand, with the exception of the house occupied by the Dutch Professor, all the houses in this block were closed behind by means of sliding shutters; it was therefore impossible for a stranger to get in. Moreover, these houses were built close up against the steep bank, 10 metres high, of the railway line.

When I asked the man guarding the corpses from whence the shots had been fired, he made a sign towards the remains of the house belonging to M. B—, Professor of the Faculty of Science, who had been absent since August 1st, having enlisted in the motor commissariat service of the 2nd Division of the Belgian army; the soldier added: "*oder daneben*" (or close to it).

This man was lying, like the rest of those I had questioned.

There had been firing, it is true, not from there, but in that direction. There, as everywhere else, the Germans had played a trick; they fired from beyond the railway in order to make a pretext for pillage and incendiarism. The bullets removed from the wounds of the Dutch Professor's maidservant, as well as those found in the drawing room on the second storey of the house, are German bullets. They pierced the window-panes in the back of the house.

It is also well known now that the German soldiers caused the pillage, which was their only concern, by discharging their rifles from the windows of the houses in order to create the impression of a violent demonstration on the part of the civilians.

26. *Report of Père Gamarra, Priest of Paraguay and Student at Louvain.**

M. Renoz, Belgian Minister at Buenos Aires, has received the following communication, the French translation of which was published in the *Courrier de la Plata* of March 4th, 1915, and the Spanish text in the *Argentina* of the same day:—

* Certain errors concerning facts of which this priest was not a personal witness have crept into the report of Père Gamarra. Thus the detention of the priests arrested in the Chaussée de Tirlemont did not last 24 hours; M. Tielemans, former parish priest of Saint Joseph, was not one of the priests who were stripped of their clothes (see p. 251), and Père Maximin was not stripped before being put to death. The number of clergy killed by the Germans in Belgium is 50; besides these, several hundreds of priests were wounded, ill-treated, put against a wall to be shot, or deported to Germany. In the district covered by the town of Louvain and the Faubourg of Kessel-Loo (where the station of Louvain is situated), 1,581 houses were burnt. In the district of Louvain 675 persons, including about 150 at Aerschot, were massacred, 4,563 houses were burnt, and over 9,000 pillaged. (*Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.*)

CONGREGACION DE LA MISSION,
Fundada por San Vicente de Paul,
(Lazaristas),
Calle Cochabamba, 1467.

Buenos Aires,
February 21st, 1915.

MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE,

I have the honour to submit to you the report which was left me on his departure to be transmitted to you by M. Manuel Gamarra, priest of Paraguay and student of Louvain University.

This priest left Louvain at the end of December. His evidence on the atrocities committed by the Germans in Belgium may perhaps have some value in the minds of certain people in these American countries.

I am, etc.,
(Sgd.) N. BATTEMBOURG,
Superior of the Lazaristes.

MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE DE BELGIQUE,

I have read in *La Nación* and other papers of Saturday, February 6th inst., a communication from the Belgian Legation concerning the way in which the Belgian Catholic clergy have been treated by the Germans in the present war.

Among numerous other incidents there is mentioned that of a group of 70 civilians, among whom were an American and a Spanish priest, who were ill-treated in every way from Louvain as far as Campenhout. The American priest was myself. Having arrived recently from Belgium, which I succeeded in leaving on December 31st last, I have seen with my own eyes some of the frightful atrocities committed systematically by the German army upon priests, women, children and the whole civil population of Belgium. I wish therefore to relate them briefly in order that my evidence may confirm the facts mentioned in the communication published by *La Nación*, adding certain personal observations. Everything I am about to say I am entirely responsible for, and vouch for on my word of honour.

And first I declare that there is no exaggeration in what has been reported concerning the isolated or general fusillades, systematic incendiarism, rape, theft and other crimes perpetrated by the soldiers of William II.

Germany is not merely a civilised nation; she claims to march at the head of civilisation. Her scientific and social culture, her industry and commerce are all of the first order, all admirable.

And this is the very reason why the world stands perplexed and stupefied at the story of this unheard-of outbreak of savagery among the German soldiers; so much so that many people refuse to give credence to it, so incapable are they of conceiving that such a civilised nation could thus exceed the Vandals and Huns in barbarity. . . .

However, there are the facts. Nor are they isolated occurrences, more or less inseparable from a state of war, and of the kind that may always arise under its conditions. It is a question of deeds methodically performed, in pursuance of a general plan conceived beforehand by a supreme authority.

It is a known fact that the General Staff of the German Army has for long adopted the brutal theory of Von Bernhardt and other leaders, according to which hostile populations are to be terrorised and rendered morally and materially incapable of interfering with the operations of the invader. Moreover, they add that "war opens the door to all kinds of excesses which are in this case more or less excusable," and "the officers and men should be warned against exercising an exaggerated humanitarianism."

Imbued with these theories and engaged as they are in a colossal struggle with powerful enemies who are threatening the very existence of their Empire, the Germans are using every means at their disposal, and set entirely on one side every consideration of sentiment and even the regulations of the Hague and Geneva Conventions. . . .

I come now to the facts mentioned in the article in the *Nación*, facts of which I myself have full knowledge, and to which I shall add others no less atrocious. Yes, the priests were specially persecuted during those days of terror in August and September, although, by the way, other non-combatants—men, women and children—were none the less cruelly martyred because of this.

1. The case of the parish priest of Bueken (a village near Louvain) is absolutely true. The martyrdom of this poor old man took place on August 21st in the presence of several of his parishioners, who had been forced to be present at it. Everything reported on the subject in the communication made to the newspaper has been verified. But I must add that before putting him to death his executioners cut off his nose and ears and tore out his nails, which fact was established when he was exhumed in order to be given a Christian burial.

2. The martyrdom of the parish priest of Gehode, on August 24th, is likewise true. Only the communication does not mention the refinement of cruelty and of degraded wantonness which accompanied his assassination. The unfortunate man (his name was Dergent) was taken to Aerschot, where he was stripped of all his clothing and an attempt was made to force him to abjure his faith. As he refused, he was tied to a cross in front of the church and the ends of his

fingers and his toes were broken with the butts of rifles. Then the inhabitants were led up and made to file past and each in turn to urinate over him.

After shooting him they threw him into the Demer Canal, where his corpse was taken out several days later and placed in the shed of Werchter.

3. The parish priest of Schaffen, near Diest, who managed to escape by feigning death and whose deposition is reproduced in the communication, has omitted to say that he was hanged and taken down again three times before the whole of the dumbfounded population. Nothing is to be seen now at Schaffen but ruins and poverty-stricken families, who bewail the death of many of their dear ones. I have been there and have seen it.

4. On August 26th the old priest Tielemans, formerly priest of Saint-Joseph at Louvain, and another priest were stripped naked and shut up for 24 hours in a pigsty. "*Schwein bei Schwein*," the Germans shouted at them. This took place on the Chaussée de Tirlemont, at Corbeek-Loo (Louvain). This fact is not mentioned in the communication.

5. On August 26th they shot Père Maximin, a Franciscan friar, parish priest of Boven-Loo, who was giving his services at a Red Cross field hospital. He was stripped before being killed. This fact also is not mentioned in the communication.

6. Another fact not reported :—

At Blauwput (Louvain) on August 28th five monks, brothers of the Miséricorde, were arrested and marched naked through the streets. Several women were treated in the same way.

7. Père Vincent, of the Order of the Franciscans, curate of Berthem, a neighbouring parish to Louvain, was shot on August 27th. A German soldier climbed up to the belfry, fired several shots with his rifle as the German troops were passing, and then accused the priest of firing. The unfortunate man was at once seized and executed against the wall of the presbytery.

8. A young Jesuit was shot at Tervueren (between Louvain and Brussels) on August 26th for having been found in possession of a notebook in which he had written down some of the German atrocities.

No doubt whatever exists as to these deeds of cruelty, since their victims were well known in Louvain, where I was at the time. Others of the same kind were perpetrated on the clergy of other towns and other provinces. The cases I have quoted are known personally to me, but the others are no less certain. The parish priests are always very well known people, and their death or disappearance could not pass unnoticed. The authenticity of these martyrdoms is proved on the most reliable evidence. One of the reasons for the fury of the Germans against Cardinal Mercier is that the wise and virtuous Archbishop published the names of those of his priests who were shot or hanged. Some bishops also were ill-treated. The names of nearly one hundred assassinated Belgian priests are mentioned; those spoken of in the article in the *Nación* are the best known. The majority belonged to the dioceses of Namur, Luxemburg, Liège and Malines.

I may be asked the reason for this special violence against the parish priests. The reason certainly lies in the great influence they exert over their parishioners. The first thing that the Germans, faithful to their principal of terrorisation, do when they occupy a locality is to take as hostages the priest and leading men, whom they shoot on the first pretext that offers itself, in the presence of the people in order to terrorise them. This brutal spirit, which the leaders inculcate in their well-disciplined men, alone explains all the unheard-of excesses of cruelty which have stained the reputation of the Germans in Belgium, although probably private quarrels and animosities count for something as well. But taking it all in all, the really guilty people are the military leaders. The German people know nothing of what their soldiers have done in Belgium; if atrocities are spoken of they imagine that the whole thing is nothing but invention and calumny. I do not believe them to be guilty. They would unite with the whole civilised world in condemning such crimes if they knew the truth. But how deceived they are! Wretched nation, condemned to remain for ever dishonoured because of the unbridled spirit of militarism that dominates it!

I shall now relate in a few words what I had to suffer in the catastrophe of Louvain. I sent a more detailed account of it to my Government at Paraguay shortly after the events. This article would be interminable if I tried to relate everything.

Later I shall prove that the burning of Louvain and the massacre of its inhabitants were premeditated; here I will only recall the fact that of the famous University Library, containing over 200,000 volumes, not a single page remains; that in the central part of the town alone 1,400 of the finest houses were abandoned to the flames; that in the environs of the town everything was in ruins and that nearly 500 men, women and children were shot or burnt alive.

And the reason for the whole thing? Nothing, absolutely nothing could justify it. To accuse this peaceable population of firing on the Germans is to calumniate innocent victims. . . .

The advance-guard of Von Kluck's army occupied Louvain without firing a shot at noon on August 19th. First error to be rectified. Louvain was not bombarded. There was no fighting except in the direction of Tirlemont and Diest, to the north and east of Louvain. The destruction of the town was expressly carried out by a company of incendiaries, seven days after its occupation. The Commandant who gave the order was called Manteuffel, and it was the 52nd Infantry Regiment that was in garrison there during the first days.

The burning began at 7.30 p.m. on August 25th. Whilst the town was burning, on every side the Germans were shooting down the unhappy people who were escaping from their flaming

houses. It was a night of unimaginable horror. The majority of the inhabitants nevertheless managed to escape by the courtyards or gardens. I did so myself, when about midnight the houses adjoining my own in the Rue Juste-Lipse began to burn.

The following morning I was taken prisoner and I was brought to the station at about 10 o'clock.

With me was a Spaniard, Père Catala, recently made Vice-Consul of Spain, and Superior of a college in the Rue de la Station, which was set fire to in spite of the Spanish flag over the door. This first group of prisoners numbered between 70 and 80, and included some highly distinguished persons, advocates, doctors, etc. Five of us were foreigners: Father Catala, three young Spaniards, and myself. We were placed in rows of four, surrounded by soldiers, who insulted and ill-treated us. At the entrance to the Rue de la Station there was a charred corpse; in the corridors of the station lay 15 or 20 corpses of civilians who had been shot. The town, too, especially in this quarter, was enveloped in smoke and flames. These were days of indescribable terror!

I held in my hand my passport, proving my foreign nationality. I sought some means to save myself from the death which I felt to be imminent, for the Germans, both men and officers, were no longer human beings, but wild beasts. God alone could save us by a miracle.

My passport was taken no notice of. Each time I tried to prove my innocence and my American nationality, the officers threatened me and struck me. When I saw that nothing was of any avail I resigned myself and prepared for death; my companions did likewise. . . .

At about 11 o'clock we were marched off towards Malines, on the outskirts of which the Belgians and Germans were fighting. On each side of the road everything was in flames. At Hérent, 5 kilometres from Louvain, I saw in the angle of a wall the corpse of a little girl of 12 or 13 years, burnt alive. We were terribly ill-treated all along the way. We were made to run, to halt, and to walk in step, whilst we were struck with sabres, butts of rifles and lances. We were kicked and spat on—and heavens, what insults! I was supporting an ailing old man who was dragging himself along on my arm in order to escape death, for he would have been bayoneted or shot if he had stopped. We all gazed at one another from time to time, stupefied by such barbarities. At last we reached a field 9 or 10 kilometres from Louvain. A halt was made and an officer told us we were going to be shot. When I repeated to him the fact that I was South American, as my passport testified, he shouted with blazing eyes that it was I who should be shot first "because I had concealed in my church rifles, machine-guns and other weapons," and he commanded me to be silent. Then our hands were tied behind our backs with our own handkerchiefs; the soldiers drew up, and all preparations were made for the execution, while we were thus left for a quarter of an hour facing the terrors of death.

We were next divided into groups, still bound, and marched, in front of soldiers deployed in skirmishing order, through the fields from village to village, towards the Belgian lines. Everywhere the Germans behaved with similar cowardice towards their prisoners, towards children and women, in approaching the enemy's lines.

At nightfall we arrived at Campenhout, where we passed the night shut up in the church whilst fighting was going on all around. The next day Père Catala, the three young Spaniards and myself were liberated. After countless difficulties we managed to reach Brussels at midday on August 27th. As for the other prisoners, who were all Belgians, they still continued to march in front of the soldiers as far as Malines, where they were finally liberated.

The other inhabitants of Louvain were treated no better. Many were led as prisoners into the interior of Germany (the camp at Münster); several thousands were dragged as far as Tirlemont, thousands more passed a whole week in the woods, with nothing to eat but potatoes which they dug up in the fields. Louvain remained empty of its inhabitants during August 27th, 28th and 29th, and the Germans took advantage of their absence to pillage methodically house after house not destroyed by the fire, so that the families that returned later, even when they found their dwellings still standing, found nothing there but the bare walls.

Words fail me to describe what the Germans have done at Louvain and throughout Belgium. The account of it would fill volumes. As for me, since God has saved my life I am glad to have been in a position to see and to vouch for all these iniquitous deeds, which call down opprobrium upon German militarism; and which, moreover, numbers of foreigners, South Americans, Uruguayans, Brazilians, Colombians, etc., have witnessed, even when they themselves have not been the victims, and can likewise vouch for.

27. *Note transmitted to the Belgian Commission of Inquiry on September 8th, 1914, by Mgr. Deploige, President de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie de l'Université, Director of the Saint-Thomas Hospital.**

CHRONOLOGICAL EXPOSITION OF EVENTS.

PERIOD OF PEACEFUL OCCUPATION.—The Germans entered Louvain at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, August 19th. Their reception was peaceable on the part of the population and courteous on

* The statements made in this note are amplified in a work published by a stretcher-bearer of the Saint-Thomas Hospital, a witness of the sack of Louvain, M. Hervé de Gruben. This work, entitled *Les Allemands à Louvain, Souvenirs d'un témoin*, published by Plon, 8, Rue Garancière, Paris, is preceded by a Preface by Mgr. Deploige. The latter, at his interrogation on July 15th, 1915, by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry, declared his readiness to stand by his note and by this work, and guaranteed the accuracy of the facts reported in them.

the part of the communal authorities. The German authorities posted up a series of commands : prohibition to walk about the streets after 8 p.m., deposit of arms, ammunitions and motor-spirit at the Town Hall ; in certain streets orders to keep the doors open and windows illuminated. Officers and soldiers from the 19th were billeted in large numbers on the inhabitants, who showed them hospitality. The injunctions were scrupulously obeyed. The communal authorities gave the German command no refusal that could possibly displease the latter, however severe were the demands made in the matter of requisitions.

ACTS OF VIOLENCE.—(A) *Statement of Facts.* 1. *The Fusillade.*—On Tuesday, August 25th, at 8 p.m., the town was perfectly calm, that is to say, the inhabitants, as on the previous days, had retired to their homes. At 8.10 p.m. (Belgian time) a lively fusillade broke out abruptly at different points simultaneously : at the Porte de Bruxelles, the Porte de Tirlemont, the Rues de la Station, Léopold, Mariè-Thérèse, des Joyeuses Entrées, de Tirlemont, etc. It was the German soldiers firing rifles and machine-guns. Certain houses were literally riddled with shot ; several persons were killed in their houses. This fusillade lasted for half an hour, and was renewed several times in the night and on the succeeding days.

2. *The Burning.*—At the same time as the fusillades incendiary fires broke out at four or five points : in the University Halles, containing the University Archives and Library, the Place du Peuple, the Rue de la Station, the Boulevard de Tirlemont and Chaussée de Tirlemont. The fires lighted by the German soldiers, by means of rockets, were continued, by order, until Sunday, the 30th, inclusive. The Halles, the Church of Saint-Pierre, the Palais de Justice, the Theatre, the Table Ronde, the Commercial and Consular School of the University, the finest parts of the town, are nothing but a heap of ruins. Several people perished in these fires. Up to to-day—September 8th—a section of grave-diggers, organised by the Saint-Thomas Hospital, has extricated from the ruins 42 corpses, and the work is far from being finished. Already 894 burnt houses have been counted in the Louvain territory, and about 500 in that of Kessel-Loo.

3. *Expulsion of the Inhabitants.*—On Thursday morning, August 27th, at 8 o'clock, the order was given, to the sound of the drum, for the whole of the civil population to evacuate the town immediately, as it was going to be bombarded at midday. Old men, women, children, sick persons, monks, nuns, even of cloistered orders, such as the Carmelites, were brutally driven along all the roads like a flock of sheep. We are only just beginning to know what this exodus of the inhabitants meant and what atrocities were committed by the soldiers. They were driven away in different directions, left without food or without shelter at night ; some were taken as far as Cologne. Several died on the way ; others, among them women and children, were shot. The bombardment was only a pretext. The motive for the expulsion of the inhabitants was to allow of the regular pillaging of the town.

4. *The Pillage.*—This began on Thursday, August 27th, and lasted nearly a week. In bands of six or eight, the soldiers broke in the doors or smashed the windows, glutted themselves with wine, knocked the furniture about, emptied the safes, stole money, pictures, works of art, silver, linen, clothing, wine and provisions. The booty was despatched by train to Germany.

(B) *The Causes.*—The Germans allege that the fusillade and all the atrocities which followed were provoked by the civil population, which undertook concerted acts of hostility against them. They have supplied various versions, each more false than the other ; as, for example, that they burned the University Library because the students had entrenched themselves there to fire on the soldiers. Again, they alleged that they burned the Church of Saint-Pierre because a machine-gun had been placed in the tower. In the eyes of those who witnessed the event, the sack of Louvain was a premeditated crime, perpetrated methodically with diabolic cruelty, cowardice and trickery. When the secretary of the United States Minister came to Louvain on Saturday, the 29th, an infamous comedy was acted in order to deceive him : he was made to pass by way of the Rue de la Station after four or five German soldiers dressed as civilians had been concealed in a house. As the secretary went by these individuals fired ; they were got out of the house by German soldiers and presented to the secretary as evidence of the culpability of the inhabitants ; to finish the comedy a mock execution was performed on the freres.

END OF THE ANARCHY.—On Thursday morning, August 27th, at 9 o'clock, Alderman Schmit had arrived at the Saint-Thomas Hospital in the Rue des Flamands ; he was joined there at noon by M. Marguery, the communal Secretary. M. Schmit was at this moment the only representative of the communal authority left in Louvain. Obligated at length to leave Louvain himself to find his family, he entrusted to M. Nerinx, one of the administrators of the Saint-Thomas Hospital, the task of reconstituting a provisional communal administration, in order to endeavour to induce the Germans to spare what remained of the town. M. Nerinx accepted, and assured himself of the co-operation of the directors, administrators, and doctors of the Saint-Thomas Hospital, who had refused to leave Louvain and abandon their patients at the moment of the expulsion of the inhabitants. On Sunday, the 30th, he entered into negotiations with Major von Manteuffel, the Commandant. He submitted to him the text of a proclamation to be sent to the inhabitants of the town in the various communes where they had taken refuge. This proclamation was also posted in the town of Louvain on Tuesday, September 1st. On the same day the first meeting was held at the Town Hall of the Committee of Leading Men (*Comité des Notables*), performing the functions of a provisional Communal Council.

The German authorities had promised the new Burgomaster that the burning and looting should be stopped, and notice of this was given to the inhabitants in the proclamation posted

on September 1st. Nevertheless the pillaging continued in broad daylight, and on Wednesday evening, September 2nd, four more incendiary fires were lighted by German soldiers, one in the Rue Léopold and three in the Rue Marië-Thérèse. A public market was first able to be held on Friday, September 4th, and after that the exiles began to return to the town.

28. *Report on the Massacre of the Valckenaers Family at Thildonck.*

On the morning of Tuesday, August 25th, 1914, the Belgians made a sortie in the district of Haecht and Rotselaer. They repulsed the German troops on a front of several kilometres as far as Campenhout and Thildonck. On the same day, the Germans, in their chagrin burnt the localities towards which they were obliged to retreat: Bueken began to burn at 4 p.m., Hérent at 6 or 7 p.m., Louvain at 10.

Very early on the following morning, August 26th, a Belgian detachment arrived and occupied the farm belonging to the Sieur Isidore Valckenaers, a well-known farmer of comfortable means, with a holding of seven hectares on the confines of the communes of Thildonck, Werchter and Rotselaer, one kilometre from the right bank of the canal; and also the adjoining farm, belonging to his brother, François-Edouard Valckenaers.

The Belgian officers were most hospitably received. From the attics of the houses and other buildings the troops opened fire on the Germans, who lay concealed in a little wood near the railroad. The order to retreat having arrived, the Belgians retired.

At least a hundred men had fired on the Germans. These could not, therefore, have reasonably supposed that it was civilians who had fired.

An hour later a detachment of 50 German soldiers, commanded by an officer who was short and fat, with red hair, and wore glasses, burst into Isidore's farm.

The farmer and two young men, his nephews, the sons of François-Edouard, were immediately seized in spite of the supplications of Louise, his eldest daughter, who clung to her father, begging the soldiers to spare his life. They repulsed her brutally and the three men were shot forthwith at 8 in the morning.

The two nephews (François-Joseph and Julien) died at once; Isidore survived. He had a horrible wound under his right collar-bone. He fell down and then after the second fusillade, of which we shall speak later, he dragged himself beneath a rock, where he was found and taken away almost dead from loss of blood, on the following day, August 27th. He is living at the present time (May, 1915), and is under treatment in a clinic in the Brussels district.

The terrified family had fled into the garden, and formed a melancholy party of eleven persons: the farmer Isidore's wife, with eight of her children; then her sister-in-law, wife of François-Edouard and mother of the two young men who had just died, and her little son aged 13.

This group consisted solely of women and children.

The carnage continued after strange preparations had been made. The Germans placed in the hands of Louise Valckenaers a kind of pennon, made from a vine-prop, torn out of the hedge, to which was tied a white cloth. Then they opened fire from different directions.

Seven victims fell, five of them mortally wounded: Louise, aged 18½, who died only a few hours later, without having received any kind of succour; Mélanie, aged 16½; Jeanne, aged 6½; Victorine, aged 2½; and Joseph Charles, aged 13. The first four were the daughters of Isidore, the last was the son of François-Edouard.

At the moment of the execution Mme. Isidore Valckenaers was carrying in her arms the little Victorine, who, seized with terror, pressed her face against her mother's and put her arms round her neck. A bullet fractured the little one's arm, and injured her face, tearing the mother's upper lip at the same time, and piercing her left eye.

Her sister-in-law was holding her little son of 13, Joseph Charles, by the hand. The bullet which shattered the head of the child splashed blood and brains over the mother's clothing.

The wound which caused the death of little Jeanne was frightful; it was in the upper part of the thigh and was 20 centimetres long and 7 centimetres deep.

The seventh victim was a boy of 12, the son of Isidore. He was struck by a bullet in the dorsal region, and it has not yet been extracted. The wound has healed.

Is it necessary to add that after having accomplished this massacre the German soldiers burnt the farms of the two brothers Valckenaers, with everything in them—furniture, cattle, and harvestings—and that they concerned themselves in no way with bringing help to the wounded?

Let us draw up the balance sheet; of the fourteen members of the two Valckenaers families who were condemned to be shot without any previous inquiry or trial, four only survived uninjured or with slight wounds. Three were seriously wounded; Isidore, his wife and his son aged 14. Seven are dead:—François Joseph aged 20, Julien aged 17, sons of François Edouard, killed at the first execution (about 8 a.m.).

Louise (aged 18), Mélanie Constance (aged 16½), Jeanne Joséphine (aged 6½), Louise Victorine (aged 2½), daughters of Isidore; Joseph Charles, aged 13, son of François Edouard, killed at the second execution (about 8.30 a.m.).

The seven certificates of death, which could not be made out until November 11th, 1914, are deposited in the communal office, at Thildonck.

The massacre took place without any provocation. The Germans could not logically accuse the Valckenaers family of firing on them, and even if they persisted in believing that the thousands of shots fired came from the occupants of the two farms, in which, moreover, not a single weapon

was found, what excuse had they for assassinating the women, girls and children constituting the second group ? And what explanation other than that of a refinement of cruelty can be given for the improvised flag which the elder of the girls had to wave while she and her family were being fired on ?

29. *Extract concerning the destruction of Louvain, from the report of the Abbé Aloïsius van den Bergh, accredited by his Eminence Cardinal Piffel, Prince-Archbishop, of Vienna, upon the inquiry made by him in Belgium in the name of the Wiener Priesterverein. (Translation of two articles that appeared in the Dutch newspaper "De Tijd," of August 25th, and 26th, Nos. 20726 and 20727.)*

On August 19th the German army entered Louvain. With the exception of a few irregularities which are obviously inevitable on such occasions, there was little cause for complaint. Also, the relations between the military and the civilians were satisfactory. The population of Louvain, which was not considered heroic at the best of times, was depressed and intimidated by the imposing numbers of troops which passed through the town. An officer, a professor at Stuttgart, assured the Fathers of the Abbaye du Parc that nowhere in Belgium had the Germans been so well received as in Louvain.

Then came the days of terror ! The affair of Louvain !

Certain persons, as reliable as they are highly placed, have assured me that the Louvain question is not yet settled and perhaps never will be. It is therefore not my intention to settle the question. I will confine myself to noting here the result of my inquiry, which was of a strictly impartial character.

Read *Die Belgischen Greuelthaten*, pages 29-32, and *Strantz, Die Eroberung Belgiens*, pages 100-109 (as well as the German *White Book*). It is the official version in Germany. In all honesty, I must admit that before my journey to Louvain I shared this opinion. Is it still so to-day ?

I wish to inform you of what I observed at Louvain. Owing to exceptionally favourable circumstances I had an opportunity of meeting all classes in Louvain. I noticed that at first these people are suspicious of strangers and only when they are convinced that they have nothing to fear do they venture to speak.

To my mind, everyone must agree that this fact is of great importance.

I have spoken to working people, to calm people, to nervous people, to women and to men. I have spoken to men of moderate dispositions, to middle-class people, to the lower middle class, to shop-keepers, to inn-keepers, and to merchants. I have spoken to doctors, University professors, the Chief Commissary of Police and the (acting) Burgomaster. I have spoken to monks of different monasteries, to the secular and regular clergy, from the highest to the lowest. All these at Louvain. Then I had an interview with His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, who, thanks to an inquiry opened by him personally, and thanks also to the numerous and valuable documents which were communicated to him, is perhaps the person best qualified to form an opinion on the subject of this highly complicated affair.

And what was the result ? After repeatedly insisting, with numbers of people, that they should tell me the honest truth, each time I received the answer : " I have never heard of a plot, and to my knowledge, not a single civilian fired." With one exception : a *Minorite Brother* declared to me that he had overheard a conversation between two workmen, one of whom said to the other : " I have struck down (*neergeschoten*) a German officer." But was it true, and if so in what circumstances did it occur ? The monk was unable to say. I mention the fact because I am anxious to state everything.

Under these conditions, I put the following question : Is it possible that there was, at Louvain, a definitely premeditated plot, spreading over the whole town, a plot whose object was to attack the German garrison on Tuesday evening, August 25th, and that this plot was put into execution by an attack on the part of civilians, which in *eine fast 24 stündige Schlacht ausartete* (turned into a battle of nearly 24 hours), that this plot was arranged to combine with a sortie of the troops in the Antwerp garrison, that is with the sanction of the Belgian authorities, although neither the Burgomaster, nor the chief Inspector of Police, nor the Rector of the University, nor the professors of the University, nor the superior and inferior clergy, either secular or regular, who are on intimate terms with all classes of the population, nor the doctors, nor the well-known citizens and humble inhabitants to whom I spoke had the slightest knowledge of it.

" I declare on my oath," said a police inspector to me, " that there was no question in Louvain of a conspiracy of this kind, that the civilians had handed over their weapons in a way which would arouse laughter if the matter were not so serious. Old bric-à-brac, ' flintlocks ' (*Flinten*) of the most extraordinary kind, and dented sabres, even razors ! "

This agrees perfectly with the character of the people of Louvain, who as some Dutch residents and natives of Louvain assured me, must decidedly be called cowardly.

But then, if the existence of such a conspiracy were impossible, how did the German authorities get knowledge of one ? Far more than this, how could they punish those who carried out this conspiracy (which is unknown to all), and punish them not in a moment of passion nor under the influence of drink, nor in consequence of a fatal mistake, but with a punishment that lasted for days—from the Tuesday till the Friday—and one so cruel, so brutal, so cynical, that I could not have imagined, nor even dreamt, that the German army, of which I had such a high opinion, could be capable of it.

And yet, this is what the Germans have done—I must recognise the fact. Truth above everything !

That there was no conspiracy in Louvain is a fact which is now established beyond all doubt in my mind ; it must be beyond all reasonable doubt in the minds of all who genuinely seek the truth.

Naturally it does not follow that no civilian fired in any part of Louvain (see "*Een Nederlander in geteisterd België*," [p. 9]). Those who claim that, claim what they cannot prove. Whoever claims to know it, must either have searched the most out-of-the-way corners of Louvain and have thus become certain that there were no firearms left ; or else he must have had under his own eyes, during all the period of the firing in Louvain, the whole of the civil population of Louvain. However, that is not the point at issue. Germany talks of a conspiracy and there was no such thing as a conspiracy. There is a *possibility* that one or more civilians fired (see work quoted above, pp. 28, 29) ; as to *proofs* that one or more civilians fired, there are none. The bullets found in the bodies of wounded or dead German soldiers were German bullets and not Belgian bullets, so far, at all events, as an examination was still possible.

Is the Louvain problem settled by this fact ? Naturally not.

We find ourselves confronted here by the fact of the destruction of a large part of Louvain ; 1,121 houses were entirely or partly destroyed, among which, it should be remarked, were many belonging to more or less eminent citizens. How many persons lost their lives is not yet determined. The intrepid Capuchin monk, Père Claes, tells me that he personally exhumed 108 corpses, 96 of which had been shot, and the remainder buried under the ruins. Not even the University Library and the Collegiate Church of Saint-Pierre were spared.

The explanation, the explanation ? Here are some *facts* :—

On the evening of August 25th, between 7 and 7.30, the alarm was sounded.

At 8 o'clock, as if by command, firing started in various parts of the town, and shortly afterwards the burning began.

Among the Germans in the town, and also among the citizens, the opinion was widespread that the French (or English) were marching from the direction of Malines, where the Germans had been thrown back.

The Louvain troops fired on the repulsed German troops, thinking that they were an enemy force.

During the night again, and also later, German soldiers fired on one another.

I learnt all these facts from eye-witnesses whose evidence, to my mind, is beyond all reasonable doubt. The autopsy also confirms the fact. In none of the wounded German soldiers was a bullet found that was not German.

Does the whole thing rest on a misunderstanding ?

In the minds of certain (or many ?) German soldiers, yes. When they found that there was no enemy, therefore that no enemy soldier had fired, they concluded that civilians must have fired. A matter easily to be understood, and indeed excusable, to some extent, if one takes into consideration the psychology of the German soldier at that time !

Certainly some of the officers, even the superior officers, believed in all sincerity that civilians had fired ; just as certainly some men and also some officers, deliberately accused the civilians of being in possession of arms when they had none, and of firing shots which they had themselves fired.

A Louvain priest (Blauwput), a sensible, cool-headed man, who even refuted a grave charge against the Germans, made the following statement to me :—

"I had billeted on me : Major von St. . . ., with three other officers, among whom was the Stabarzt S. (Staff doctor). Major von St. . . ., was a good man, but he was as much convinced of the fact that the Belgian Government was acting in collusion with the *francs-tireurs*, as of the fact that the civilians of Louvain had fired.

"I declared openly to him that the Belgian Government and Belgian clergy had done their duty, and that I could not admit that the civilians had fired.

"I observed that this outspoken statement astonished him ; in his heart of hearts, however, he appreciated my frankness. I even heard him say to the young officer, von Kl. : 'That man is not afraid to look us in the face. We could make friends.' The medical officer, Sch., was Listen to this :

"On Friday morning at 10 o'clock he came into the presbytery with his head swathed in a bandage ; he was wounded in the head. He went up to his room to dress the wound.

"At this moment two girls came into the presbytery to fetch the medical officer's linen. They said that the officer had fallen from the wall of the workshop, striking his head on a cogged wheel. They were present when the incident occurred.

Some minutes later four soldiers arrived in our kitchen to help the servant peel the potatoes. They told the servant that some civilians had fired on the officer ; he had informed them of it himself. When the servant told them what had really taken place they exchanged significant glances. The officer did in fact tell me himself, at my presbytery : *Man hat mich beschossen* (someone fired at me).

"That is not all. My parishioners were accused of having fired from various houses (I am absolutely convinced that no one fired here). Fifty-seven men, among whom was myself, were drawn up at the corner of the Rue de l'Eglise.

"Major von St. . . . : Someone fired. Three soldiers have been wounded ; one of them is dying. It is my duty to punish you. You shall be decimated !

"Each time the sixth had to step out. I was number one. There was no danger for me, therefore.

"Before they began to count, Dr. S. appeared again, ran to Major von St., pulled a handful of revolver cartridges out of his pocket, and turning to the Major said : 'I found these cartridges at the priest's house.'

"The Major approached me, saying: 'These cartridges (*Patronen*) have been found at your house.

"I did not understand him at first, because here we say '*Cartouchen*' instead of *Patronen*, but when I did understand I cried in a passion of indignation: 'It is a lie! It is not true!'

"The Major's face darkened, and he pushed the doctor aside scornfully, saying: 'Get away. I searched that house myself.'

Then the victims were made to step out. A monk of the *Miséricorde* was placed so as to be one of them. When the turn of the fifth came he gave way, crying: "My children, my children!" Then several voices were heard: *Den Pfaff müssen wir haben* (It's the cassock that we want), and quite arbitrarily they took the Capuchin monk, Père Maximin. These five were led past the door of the convent for nuns opposite here, placed in front of it, and shot.

"I must add that in Louvain the opinion is general that on that night the soldiers violated the Sisters of the above-mentioned convent. I am able to state categorically that none of these Sisters was insulted. Enough took place, let us not exaggerate."

A person of very high position in Louvain, who is better acquainted than anyone with the facts, tells me:—

"On Friday the 28th, the secretary of the American Legation arrived at the station in a motor car. He inquired of the officers there: 'Is this firing of the Louvain civilians really such a serious affair?'

"'Would you like to see for yourself? Good! Drive down the Rue Marie-Thérèse here and you can find out.'

"After a short time he drove into the street and when he reached a certain spot did actually undergo fire.

"He turned, and went back to the station.

"'Now I have to admit it.

"'But who was it that fired?'

"It is proved (1) that there was firing in the Rue Marie-Thérèse; (2) That the Rue Marie-Thérèse was evacuated by the inhabitants. On Thursday the order was in fact given to the inhabitants to evacuate the town, because it was going to be bombarded. And a large part was evacuated, including—I vouch for this, and my position enables me to be certain of it—the Rue Marie-Thérèse; (3) That in the Rue Marie-Thérèse a German sentry post had been placed. I can give you the number of it! *Sapienti sat!*"

The German medical officer, Dr. B., has declared on oath before the German authorities that Père Parijs, O.P. (one of the Louvain hostages who was obliged to read at the street corners a proclamation concerning the punishment awaiting the *francs-tireurs*) had declared: "Civilians fired"

Père Parijs accuses Dr. B., before the same authority, of lying, maintains his statement, and is allowed to go free.

The prison chaplain, Père T., goes out at about 8 in the morning. A soldier fires into the air, and shouts to his comrades: *Er hat geschossen* (He fired). The priest is arrested. Some soldiers break in by force into the house of Professor Verhelst's (16 Rue Léopold), who was on the point of escaping to the cellar (it was the Tuesday evening). They go upstairs and shots are fired from the upper storey. They return to the street. Then other soldiers arrive. "*Man hat hier geschossen!* (Someone fired here)."

I do not wish to continue the enumeration of these details, although there are certainly more of them.

After the above, I think I may say that the question cannot be settled solely on the grounds of a misunderstanding. If there had been a misunderstanding here, and nothing but a misunderstanding, why did not the firing cease, and the burning, and the looting (they looted a great deal under the very eyes of the officers, as Père Claes* affirms) after the mistake had been discovered? It continued for days.

And did those in command likewise believe in the firing, and report it to a superior authority, adding that several officers, one of whom even belonged to the highest rank of society, had been killed? Was there then an order given "from above" (*van boven*) to destroy Louvain, and had this order to be executed, even after the discovery of the error, in order to save the "honour" of the German Army.† I know that I am propounding a terrible question (I, who was convinced, on my

* A Jesuit priest declared to me that he saw a truck of a Red Cross train filled with furniture taken from the pillage at Louvain. This Jesuit was at the beginning very pro-German.

† I am anxious to relate a further episode, which I have from a correspondent of authority, M. Grondijs. On Wednesday the 26th, in the morning, this gentleman was at the Town Hall of Louvain, where he wished to show his passport, and heard the followingspeech made to the soldiers there:

"Soldiers, we have spread terror before us, and punished the people everywhere severely. We must do yet more. We have still to destroy a large town."

It appears from the work *Een Nederlander in geteisterd België*, by the above-mentioned correspondent, that the military governor was innocent of the destruction of Louvain. It is moreover indeed (*überhaupt*) difficult to accuse any particular individual. Therefore, we prefer to let the facts speak for themselves.

(Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry: The work mentioned above has been published in French under the title: *Les Allemands en Belgique. Louvain et Aerschot. Notes d'un témoin hollandais*. Berger-Levrault, Paris-Nancy, No. 34 of the Series: *Pages d'Histoire*, 1914-1916.

departure for Louvain, of the accuracy of the German version) but I cannot, in truth, propound it in any other way. And even then, I am not at the end of my task. There is still this :

On Monday morning, August 24th, the Oberarzt Dr. Tenzler came from Tirlemont to Louvain to inspect the hospitals. After examination, he expressed his satisfaction : *Alles wird verwaltungsmässig geführt.* (Everything is being done in accordance with rules.) On the same Monday, some new staff arrived for the service of the field-hospital. And then what happened ?

On Monday afternoon the order came to send away all the German wounded from the military and civil hospitals, and to transport them to another place (to Tirlemont ?) That was on the Monday. On Tuesday the burning began.

At the house of the notary . . . two officers were supping on the Tuesday. The alarmsounded. The officers warned their host to remain inside his house, for terrible things were about to take place. (It is not safe here, was what they said : *Het is niet zeker, wat ze zeiden.*)

At the house of Professor Michotte, others said as the alarm sounded : *Arme Leute.* (Poor people.)

At the house of Professor Fratteur, some officers wept when the alarm sounded.

A priest, living at . . . near Louvain, had some officers billeted on him. One of them said (it was three days before the burning) : "Louvain will not remain standing much longer either." The priest became alarmed, wanted to know more, but learned nothing further. On the following day, he sent a messenger to Louvain to get news of his family. The messenger returned, saying : "All is quiet at Louvain."

Then came the third day, August 25th.

In a café in the Rue de la Station some officers were billeted. The tenant's brother, who was there at that time, met an old business acquaintance among the officers. They associated in very friendly fashion. On Tuesday, August 25th, while at supper, the officer was called out of the room. He returned in a state of great emotion, and prepared his friends for what was to follow. The officers went out and soon after sent for their kits.

This took place at about 7.30. On the same evening, during the atrocities, the soldiers made their way into this café, and dragged the family away, bound, to the station. The officer above-mentioned then sent his orderly to see what had happened to the family, and eventually to take care of them.

I confine myself to this ; other similar declarations exist which are highly significant.

That the order was given to destroy the town, or at least a great part of it, is certain to my mind.

I know one person who saw, in the hands of an officer, a plan of Louvain, indicating the parts to be destroyed.

The Collegiate Church of Saint-Pierre was burnt with deliberate intention. It was burnt before the houses surrounding it. And a glance into the church at once convinces one of the fact. A whole series of side-altars, on the right hand side, separated from one another by projecting walls, were devoured by the flames. Here it is obvious that there was premeditation. Further, the door of the sacristy was forced, and an attempt made to steal the sacred vessels. The fact that the arms deposited by the citizens of Louvain were kept in the Collegiate Church of Saint-Pierre, and that the Belgian soldiers had installed a machine-gun (anti-aircraft) on the tower of Saint-Pierre may be some explanation of the matter.* The University Library was also burnt with deliberate intent. We can deduce this from the mere fact that on Wednesday morning it was entirely consumed, which would have been an impossibility without the use of chemical products. Moreover, a Josephite Father called the attention of a commanding officer to the fact that the building which was being destroyed was the famous Library of the University. The reply was "*Es ist Befehl*" (it is the order)—(Tuesday evening, about 11 o'clock).

The assertion made by many Louvain people that before the destruction the Germans had stolen precious works and MSS. is a calumny. Doubtless many books from the well-known "Bibliothèque Choisie," of Louvain, must have been sent to Germany. Hence, perhaps, this persistent belief.

I can understand that soldiers on active service who, for the most part, were fanatics and "mangeurs de prêtres" (priest-haters), and many of whom abandoned themselves to drink in a way that defies description (though some of them, certainly, were not drunk, but, on the contrary, acted in cold blood), I can understand that such elements (it is said, though I do not personally vouch for this, that they were the worst troops in the whole of the German Empire) should burn and pillage beyond the orders of the military authorities, and that at a given moment there was no possibility of holding them in check.

Leaving on one side, however, the principle that *causa causae, causa causate* (the cause of the cause is also the cause of the effect), to which I do not even wish to have recourse in this matter, I put this question :—

Why were the commanders able, in spite of all, to protect the Town Hall, and why was the whole commune of Héverlé, together with all the property of the "German" Count of Arenberg, spared ?

* These suggestions are erroneous. No deposit of arms was made in the Collegiate Church of Saint-Pierre, nor in any other church in Louvain. No machine-gun was placed on the tower of Saint-Pierre. (Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.)

This is a proof that discipline was maintained *when required*.

As for supplying an attempt at an explanation, from a strategical, psychological, and religious point of view, I consider myself at present incapable of it.

30. *Translation of the Report of the Correspondent of the Dutch newspaper, "De Tijd" (issue of January 23rd, 1915), on the subject of the exhumation, made on January 17th, 1915, of victims of the fusillades in the Place de la Station at Louvain.*

Before the statue of Van de Weyer, the R. P. Valérius Claes, who up to this time, with praiseworthy self-abnegation, had undertaken in the town the exhumation of 96 corpses, was bending over the grave. To him fell the sad privilege of aiding the families there present to recognize their dead. Wearing the white blouse of a surgeon and gloves of india-rubber, he collected the scattered limbs, which were in a horrible state of decomposition; he was helped in his gruesome task by M. Lucien Spéder. All the town authorities were present. Monsieur Alfred Nerinx, University Professor, acting Burgomaster, Dr. Louis Maldague, University Professor, Dr. Dieudonné, doctor of the city, M. Simons, examining magistrate. Other persons of distinction came to take part in the ceremony during the day, such as Dr. Noyons, professor, Alderman de Munter, the German Colonel Lubbert, Commandant of the town, and his aide-de-camp, M. Gilbert, Inspector of Police, M. Tilemans, advocate and member of the Communal Council.

The streets adjoining the Place de la Gare were guarded by the police in order to prevent the public from approaching the spot where, according to the *Kölnische Zeitung*, no corpse had been buried!

The German soldiers themselves could not remain in the square. A sentry was on guard with his weapon lying at his feet, before the tomb of the 16 German soldiers who lie at the foot of the statue, likewise struck down by German bullets! Thirty coffins, painted yellow, were standing in a row, waiting to be closed on the sad remains.

Fortunately the wind was fresh that day, for the odour emitted from the open tomb was unbearable. The objects found on the bodies were at once slipped into numbered bags. Twenty bodies were exhumed, after terrific labour, twenty bodies thrust into a hole which did not measure more than 4 square metres!

Infinite precautions were necessary in order to avoid putting together arms and legs belonging to different bodies, so mixed were the limbs. . . .

Emotion overcame all present. Even Colonel Lubbert could not help saying to the acting Burgomaster: "It is incomprehensible that this should be the outcome when one knows how well educated and cultured our nation is!" And the aide-de-camp added: "I am thankful I was not in Louvain at that tragic time"—words which have their value, and show plainly that honest Germans regret at present this unspeakable act ordained by their rulers in defiance of the most elementary laws of humanity.

Professor Maldague, who had been among the unhappy prisoners who were picked out in cold blood one after the other and massacred, and who had miraculously escaped death, was unable to control his overwhelming emotion. On that fateful day the human herd was forbidden to look at the cruelties perpetrated by the soldiers of cultured Germany, but a woman standing beside Professor Maldague ventured all the same to glance round, and saw that the victims chosen for expiation (of what crimes?) had to lie down flat on the pavement. They were then killed by a bullet in the back of the neck, the spine or the head.

The majority of the victims lay, therefore, with fractured skulls, due not only to bullets, but to blows with the butts of rifles! And this did not suffice. All the bodies found (the medical reports vouch for it) had been pierced by bayonets! Certain of them had the legs or arms broken! Two bodies only bore no wounds. An autopsy will be held in order to discover the cause of death. The belief is general that it was due to asphyxia, but it is well to await the doctors' statements.

Mme. Van Ertrijck recognized, at the edge of the pit, her husband, aged 60, the well-known cigar-maker, and her son, aged 27; then the body of a Belgian soldier appeared whom no one was able to identify; next that of a little boy under 15 years of age (also a *franc-tireur* no doubt?); Charles Munkemer, husband of Amélie Marant, born in 1885, Edgard Bicquet, brewer of Boortmeerbeek, whose family, known by everyone in Louvain, lives in the Rue de la Station; the retired Belgian Major, Eickhorn, aged 60 (inventor of cartridges for short range firing); A. Van de Gaer; O. Candries; Mme. A. Bruyninckx, née Aug. Marien; Mme. Périlleux, aged about 60. But in disturbing the earth a second tomb was discovered, containing seven more corpses, hidden under 30 centimetres of earth.

The next day the funereal task continued. From quite a small grave two corpses more were brought to light: those of Henri Decorte, workman of Kessel-Loo, and of M. Van Bladel, parish priest of Hérent. Not a sound was heard when the body of this unfortunate priest was exhumed. The R. P. Claes alone exclaimed: "The priest of Hérent." The poor man was 71 years of age!

31. *List of civilians killed in the limits of the Communes of Louvain, Hérent, Heverle, Kessel-Loo and Corbeek-Loo, and of inhabitants of these Communes who were killed elsewhere.**

No.	NAMES AND SURNAMES.	OCCUPATION.	RESIDENCE.	AGE.
1	Ackermans (Guillaume) ...	Foreman ...	Kessel-Loo ...	40
2	Armée (Charles) ...	Hairdresser ...	Louvain ...	45
3	Artois (Pierre) ...	Agriculturist ...	Hérent ...	38
4	Bartels (Louis) ...	Labourer ...	Kessel-Loo ...	35
5	Beusen (Martin) ...	Hawker ...	" ...	49
6	Bicquet (Edgar) ...	Brewer ...	Boortmeerbeek ...	59
7	Boelaert (Franz) ...	Factory Stoker ...	Kessel-Loo ...	51
8	Boghe (Jules) ...	Butcher ...	Héverlé ...	39
9	Boogaerts (Aloïs) ...	Postman ...	Louvain ...	54
10	Boon (François) ...	Agriculturist ...	Lubbeek ...	26
11	Boschmans (Joseph)† ...	Medical Student† ...	Thielt† ...	23
12	Bosmans (Pierre) ...	Guard ...	Héverlé ...	45
13	Breedenraedt (Pierre) ...	Wine bottler ...	Louvain ...	48
14	Brouwers (Pierre) ...	Factory stoker ...	Kessel-Loo ...	61
15	Bruyninx-Marien (Alida) ...	Charwoman ...	Aerschot ...	26
16	Bullekens (Augustin) ...	Workman ...	Kessel-Loo ...	25
17	" (François) ...	" ...	" ...	29
18	" (Louis) ...	" ...	" ...	56
19	Caels (Henri)‡ ...	—‡ ...	Hérent‡ ...	48
20	" (Victor) ...	Shoemaker ...	" ...	57
21	Candries (Oscar) ...	Hotel keeper ...	Louvain ...	36
22	Carette (Robert)§ ...	Priest, Professor at Collège Saint-Pierre§ ...	" §... ...	38
23	Chrétien (Gabriel) ...	Head mechanic ...	" ...	55
24	Claes (Célestine) ...	Teacher ...	Aerschot ...	19
25	Clevenbergh (Adolphe) ...	Scene-shifter ...	Kessel-Loo ...	38
26	Coessens (Joseph) ...	Clerk ...	Schaerbeek (Brussels) ...	22
27	Coopmans (Martin) ...	Butcher ...	Louvain ...	29
28	Crab (Joseph) ...	Workman ...	" ...	32
29	" (Jean-Baptiste) ...	Painter ...	" ...	60
30	Danckers (Pierre)|| ...	Day-labourer|| ...	Kessel-Loo|| ...	43
31	David-Aschbach (Léon) ...	Independent ...	Louvain ...	42
32	" (Pierre) ...	" ...	" ...	82
33	De Becker (Edgard) ...	Advocate, secretary to Min. of Labour. ...	" ...	47
34	Decorde (Fernand) ...	Workman ...	Kessel-Loo ...	20
35	Decoster (Joseph) ...	Merchant ...	Louvain ...	42
36	Deflandre (Camille) ...	Medical student ...	" ...	19
37	" ...	Sub-station master ...	" ...	56
38	Degoyen (Louis) ...	Agriculturist ...	Hérent ...	60
39	Degoyen (Theophile) ...	" ...	" ...	22
40	Dekoninck (Victor) ...	" ...	" ...	23
41	Delcon (Joseph) ...	Tradesman ...	Louvain ...	51
42	De Meyer (Arthur) ...	— ...	Hérent ...	18 mos.
43	De Rauw (Alphonse) ...	Founder ...	" ...	46
44	Desmedt (Joseph) ...	Workman ...	Louvain ...	58
45	Devos (Augustin) ...	" ...	Kessel-Loo ...	60
46	Devroey (Eugène) ...	Agriculturist ...	" ...	43
47	" (Louis) ...	" ...	" ...	54
48	Devroy (Edouard) ...	Workman ...	" ...	32
49	Devyver (Jean) ...	Shoemaker ...	Louvain ...	25
50	Devyver-Coquette (Marie) ...	— ...	" ...	25
51	De Weerd (Jean) ...	Workman ...	Kessel-Loo ...	19
52	De Wever (Arthur) ...	Joiner ...	Héverlé ...	44
53	Dierickx (Pierre) ...	Blacksmith ...	Kessel-Loo ...	58
54	Dubrulle (David) ...	Druggist ...	Louvain ...	32
55	Dubrulle-Roodhans (Marie) ...	— ...	" ...	34
56	Duchateau (Pierre) ...	Hotel keeper ...	" ...	40
57	Ducuroir (Ghislain) ...	Innkeeper ...	" ...	36
58	Dufresne (Charles) ...	Day-labourer ...	" ...	35
59	Dupierreux (Eugène)¶ ...	Jesuit¶ ...	" ¶... ...	23
60	Eickhorn (Pierre) ...	Major (pensioned) ...	" ...	60

* The number of inhabitants of Louvain, Hérent, Heverle, Kessel-Loo and Corbeek-Loo, killed outside the jurisdiction of these communes amounts to six. The place where they were killed is indicated in each case in a footnote. Nine corpses were not identified; seven persons disappeared.

† Usual residence, Louvain. ‡ Feeble-minded. § Shot at Aerschot. || Killed at Lubbeek.

¶ Killed at Tervueren.

No.	NAMES AND SURNAMES.	OCCUPATION.	RESIDENCE.	AGE.
61	Feyaerts (Ida)	—	Héverlé	12
62	" (Marie)	Day-labourer (female) ...	"	40
63	Fisenne (Victor)	Workman	Nodebais	45
64	Forger (Félix)*	Monk (Josephite)*	Louvain*	53
65	Freché (François)	Painter	"	49
66	Gilson (Paul)	Independent	"	47
67	Goemans (Louise)	"	"	81
68	Goosens (Henri)	Wheelwright	Hérent	57
69	Goris (Jean-Baptiste)	Formerly workman	Corbeek-Loo	71
70	" (Joseph)	—	Winghe-St.-Georges	20
71	Heerenaer (Louis)	Bailiff	Louvain	52
72	Hooghe (Alphonse)	Founder	Hérent	?
73	Hugaerts (Jean-Baptiste)	Workman	Héverlé	34
74	Jacobs (Louis)	Agriculturist	Aerschot	39
75	Janssens (Gérard)	Innkeeper	Louvain	28
76	" (Gustave)	Joiner	"	30
77	" (Philippe)	Agriculturist	Hérent	48
78	" (René)	Miller	Kessel-Loo	20
79	Jespers (Bartholomé)	Carter	Hérent	42
80	Kestens (Emile)	Day-labourer	Corbeek-Loo	15
81	" (Frédéric)	Workman (pensioned) ...	"	71
82	Keustermans (Constant)	Brickmaker	Kessel-Loo	19
83	Knaepen (Marcellin)	Brewery workman	Corbeek-Loo	38
84	Laboubée (Jean)	Hotel keeper	Louvain	51
85	" (Blanche)	" (female)	"	27
86	Lafili (Auguste)	Café waiter	Louvain	14
87	Lammens (Joseph)	Professor	Kessel-Loo	52
88	Lefèvre (Achille)	Engine fitter	Louvain	36
89	Lenaerts (Auguste)	No profession	"	56
90	Lenertz (Vincent)	Architect, chief draughts- man at the University	"	50
91	Leynen (Louis)	—	Corbeek-Loo	16
92	Lens (Louis)	Mason	Hérent	54
93	Lintermans (Adolphe)	Butcher	Kessel-Loo	36
94	Lombaerts (Engelbert)	Priest of Boven-Loo	"	53
95	Mahy (Adolphe)	Pensioner	Louvain	72
96	" (Jean)	Cheese-merchant	Kessel-Loo	43
97	Malevé (Joseph)†	Butcher†	Hérent†	50
98	Marteau (Pierre)	Workman	Kessel-Loo	48
99	Meeus (Fernand)	Electrician	"	33
100	" (Jules)	—	"	4
101	Mertens (Charles)	Agriculturist	Haecht	36
102	Michiels (Léon)	Workman	Louvain	38
103	Mückemer (Karl) (German sub- ject)	Joiner	Kessel-Loo	29
104	Munters (Guillaume)	Workman	"	41
105	Ons (Jan)	Day-labourer	"	49
106	Onzen (Rosalie)	Charwoman	Hérent	55
107	Oversteyns (Guillaume)	Brickmaker	Corbeek-Loo	18
108	Pardon (Pierre)	Turner	Louvain	36
109	Peeters (Jacques)	Agricultural labourer ...	Corbeek-Loo	58
110	" (Marie-Thérèse)	Charwoman	Weert-St.-Georges	25
111	Pelgrims (Jean)	Agriculturist	Kessel-Loo	17
112	" (Louis)	"	"	59
113	Périlleux (Julienne)	—	Louvain	63
114	Pierco (Jean)	Workman	Hérent	54
115	Poels (Félix)	Barber	Louvain	88
116	Puelinckz (Marie)	—	Kessel-Loo	12
117	Rans (Edouard)	Cattle dealer	Hérent	40
118	Rau (Pierre) (Dutch subject)	Hawker	Oss (Holland)	22
119	Ravoet (François)	Gardener	Corbeek-Loo	38
120	Raymon (Marie)	—	Louvain	73
121	Respen (Elisabeth)	Charwoman	"	39
122	" (Franz)	Labourer	"	43
123	" (Marie)	—	"	17
124	" (Philomène)	—	"	11
125	Rodaer (Armand)	Plasterer	Héverlé	40
126	Romain (Christian)	Hotel-keeper	Louvain	58

* Frere Allard.

† Killed at Soltan.

No.	NAMES AND SURNAMES.	OCCUPATION.	RESIDENCE.	AGE.
127	Ruelens (Guillaume)	Workman	Kessel-Loo	21
128	" (Pierre)	Agriculturist	"	19
129	Ruttens (Joseph)	Shopkeeper	Louvain	82
130	Scheepmans (Karl)	Day-labourer	Kessel-Loo	38
131	Schepmans (Vital)	Agriculturist	Corbeek-Loo	40
132	Schoovaerts (Louis)	Tramway conductor	Kessel-Loo	53
133	Schrevens (Pierre)	Workman	"	41
134	Selfslagh (Joseph)	Rural guard	Hérent	57
135	Selleslaghs (Pierre)	Boatman	Louvain	68
136	Smeermont (Charles)	Shopkeeper	"	58
137	Smets (Jean)	Slate quarryman	"	45
138	Socquet (Désiré)	Workman	Kessel-Loo	64
139	Soetewege (Félix)*	Clerk*	"	34
140	Sombroek (Vincent) (Dutch subject)†	Monk †	Louvain†	45
141	Sterckx (André)	Shopkeeper	"	59
142	" (Elisabeth)	—	"	62
143	" (Marie)	—	"	20
144	Stratman (André) (German subject)‡	Monk (Josephite)‡	" ‡	42
145	Swevers (Pierre)	Workman	Kessel-Loo	54
146	Symons (Albert)	Potato dealer	Louvain	52
147	" (Guillaume)	Cabinet maker	"	25
148	" (Philippine)	—	"	63
149	Terclavers (Henri)	Agricultural labourer	Corbeek-Loo	74
150	Terclavers-Scheepmans (Virginie)	Charwoman	"	73
151	Thiéry (Paul)	Engineer	Kessel-Loo	25
152	Tilman (Georges)	Workman	"	34
153	Tossyn (François)	Factory workman	Corbeek-Loo	49
154	Tré (Jean)	Workman	Louvain	64
155	Utsol (Louis)	Agriculturist	Hérent	55
156	Valkenaers (Vital)	Compositor	Louvain	57
157	Van Aerschot (Louis)	Agriculturist	Hérent	42
158	" (Prosper)	"	"	45
159	Van Bellengen (Emil)	Founder	"	20
160	Van Billoen (Victor)	Sub-station-master	Louvain	52
161	Van Bladel (Hippolyte)	Priest	Hérent	72
162	Van Buyten (François-Frédéric)	Iron moulder	Louvain	31
163	Van de Broek (Augusta)	—	Corbeek-Loo	17
164	Van de Broek-Terclavers (Joséph)	Charwoman	"	48
165	" (Louis)	Factory workman	"	46
166	Van Caekenberg (Karl)	Workman	Gand	33
167	Vanden Bak (Pierre)	Brickmaker	Corbeek-Loo	16
168	Vanden Bosch (Franz-Pieter) ...	Agriculturist	Kessel-Loo	19
169	" " " " " " " " " " " "	Machine overseer	"	55
170	Vanden Broeck (Joseph)	Agriculturist	Hérent	44
171	Vanden Eynde (Théophile)	Pig dealer	Kessel-Loo	30
172	Van der Hulst (Gustave)	Carter	"	31
173	Van der Look (Louis)	Workman	"	53
174	Vander Meeren (Joseph)	Draughtsman	"	38
175	Vanderstraeten (Franz)	Shoemaker	Hérent	57
176	Vandermosten (Pierre)	Servant	Louvain	61
177	Vander Willighen (Henri)	Wheelwright	"	69
178	Vande Venne (Alphonse)	Café waiter	"	20
179	Van Dyck (Joseph)	Milkman	Hérent	36
180	Van Emelen (Jean)	—	"	6 mos.
181	Van Ermen (Jean)	Servant	"	24
182	Van Ertryck (Edouard)	Manufacturer	Louvain	25
183	" (François)	"	"	60
184	Van Eylen (Félix)	Workman	Kessel-Loo	23
185	Van Groenderbeek (Pierre)	"	"	67
186	Van Hentenryck (Jules)	Cigar-maker	"	25
187	" (Victor)	Baker	Louvain	34
188	Van Holm (Maximim)	Capuchin	Hérentals	35
189	Van Humbeek (Fernand)	Clerk	Brussels	19
190	Van Krieken (Ambroise)	Agricultural labourer	Thildonck	23
191	Van Meerbeek (Edouard)	Workman	Kessel-Loo	22
192	Van Rillaer (Camille)	Agriculturist	Hérent	20
193	Van Steenberghe (Pierre)	Engineer	Kessel-Loo	36

* Killed at Münsterlager. † Père Vincent, killed at Bueken. ‡ Frère Sébastien.

No.	NAMES AND SURNAMES.	OCCUPATION.	RESIDENCE.	AGE.
194	Verbruggen (Joseph)	Servant	Corbeek-Loo	42
195	Verhaegen (Jules)	Antiquary	Louvain	53
196	Verleysen-Van Weyenbergh (Marie-Pauline)	—	„	28
197	Verlinden (Joseph)	Engine fitter	„	54
198	Verstraeten (Charles)	Prison warder	Kessel-Loo	43
199	Veuchelen (Alphonse)	Gardener	Hérent	25
200	Vivet (Jean)*	Monk (teaching)*	Kessel-Loo*	22
201	Vleugels (Jean)	Workman	Louvain	19
202	Vols (Victor)	Cook	„	52
203	Vranckx (Henri)	Workman	„	65
204	„ (Armand)	Agricultural labourer	Kessel-Loo	16
205	Weets (Louis)	Labourer	„	36
206	Winnepennings (Gustave)	Bricklayer	Corbeek-Loo	32
207	Winterberg (Anne)	Hawker (female)	Clèves	64
208	Wouters (Auguste)	Brickmaker	Corbeek-Loo	41
209	„ (Charles)	Founder	Kessel-Loo	19
210	„ (Désiré)	„	„	19

* Frère Candide, of the Frères de la Miséricorde.

DIVISION OF THE VICTIMS BY SEX AND AGE :

	Males	...	...	...	186
	Females	...	...	...	24
					<u>210</u>
Victims	Under 5 years	...	...	...	3
	From 5 to 9	...	...	...	0
	„ 10 to 15	...	...	...	5
	„ 16 to 17	...	...	...	6
	„ 18 to 49	...	...	...	126
	„ 50 to 59	...	...	...	40
	„ 60 to 69	...	...	...	18
	„ 70 to 79	...	...	...	7
	Above 80	...	...	...	4
	Age unknown	...	...	...	1
					<u>210</u>

PART III.



APPENDIX.

I.

Order sent on the 4th August, 1914, by the Belgian Minister of the Interior to the Communal Authorities:—

Brussels,

4th August, 1914.

GENTLEMEN,

The German Army has invaded this country in violation of the Treaties guaranteeing our neutrality. The Belgian Government has decided to fulfil the obligations which it undertook, on its own part, in those Treaties. From the present moment it is making preparations to use all the means at its disposal.

In fulfilling this undertaking with the aid of the Army, it feels certain that all Belgians, who are so profoundly attached to their own country, to their independence, and to their King, who represents them in his person, will gather round him and afford him their most devoted assistance.

In the existing circumstances the communal authorities will have a task which will be sometimes difficult, but always important.

According to the laws of war, these authorities are not like political officials, who are compelled by the presence of hostile armies to withdraw from the country in most cases. The communal authorities, on the other hand, will continue to remain at their posts and to exercise their official duties for the benefit of the inhabitants. They will only relinquish these duties if the invader should attempt to impose actions upon them which would be in direct opposition to their duties of loyalty to their King and country.

The hostile invasion will cause disturbance and agitation among the people. The first care of the communal authorities will be to instruct those under them in the duties of all towards their country, and in the way in which they will have to behave when faced by the invading army.

This is the object of the present order.

So long as the enemy troops shall not have entered on the soil of the commune the Burgomaster will use the utmost expedition in transmitting to the civil and military authorities all news that comes to him of the march and approach of the invader. He will execute with accuracy and despatch the orders received by him from the authorities, and will render to them all the assistance required by them in the organisation of National Defence.

The movements of all enemy soldiers, whether of single soldiers or of troops, shall be forthwith notified to the nearest military authority. It is hardly necessary to say that local authorities, as well as the inhabitants in general, will absolutely refuse to supply any information which may be asked for by enemy soldiers as to the situation or movements of the Belgian Army.

Acts of Hostility.—According to the laws of war acts of hostility, that is to say, resistance and attack by arms, the use of arms against single enemy soldiers, or direct intervention in any battle or engagement are never permitted to those who are not, either as members of the Army or Civic Guard or of a Volunteer Corps, organised under military law, under the command of a superior officer, and do not wear a distinctive uniform or badge.

Those who are authorised to commit acts of hostility are entitled to be treated as belligerents, and when they are captured or lay down their arms they have the right to treatment as prisoners of war.

If the population of a territory which has not yet been occupied by the enemy takes up arms of its own accord on the approach of the invader without having had time to organise itself in a military form, it will be considered as belligerent if it bears arms openly and conforms to the laws of war.

A single individual who does not belong to any of these classes of belligerents and who should commit an act of hostility would not be considered or treated as a belligerent. If he were taken he would be treated with greater severity than a prisoner of war, and might even be put to death.

With all the more reason the inhabitants of the country are bound to abstain from acts forbidden even to soldiers. The most noticeable of these acts are the use of poison or poisoned arms; killing or treacherously wounding members of the army or nation of the invaders; killing or wounding an enemy who, either having laid down his arms or having no longer any means of self-defence, has surrendered unconditionally.

Passage of the Army. Requisitions.—In the case of a passage of enemy troops in places where there are no detachments of the Belgian Army, the commanders of the hostile army will abstain in all probability from all acts of hostility and will only claim board and lodging. The laws of war only allow this kind of requisition or the personal service of the inhabitants for the immediate requirements of troops, and only so far as is consistent with the available resources of the locality, and the inhabitants cannot be forced to engage in any military operations. If they are not paid in cash they must be furnished with receipts for what they provide. If the inhabitants refuse to obey these requisitions there can be no doubt that they will be procured by force. This would cause the population still greater suffering. The commanding officers will in most cases apply to the communal authorities, and these latter should do their best to secure an equitable distribution of the requisitions among the inhabitants so as to lighten the burden.

If in making requisitions the rules indicated above are not observed, the communal authorities will protest to the military chiefs, and will only act under compulsion.

Save as regards these requisitions the inhabitants have a right to the absolute respect of their private property, of their honour, and of their persons and the persons of their family. If the officers or soldiers of the enemy make any attempt on these the communal authorities will make an energetic protest.

The invader will take possession of the means of transport, the railways, the telegraphs, and the telephones, and the local authorities will be powerless to prevent him.

The regulation concerning the laws of war adopted by the Powers at the Hague in 1907 forbids a belligerent to force the inhabitants to give information about the army of their country or their means of defence. The inhabitants should know that they have the right to refuse to make known anything about these matters to the invader, and that this refusal is binding on them in the interests of their country.

Formerly some of the Powers made reservations with regard to the application of this rule, and it is therefore possible that it may not be adopted so far as concerns guides, who, according to the ancient customs of war, are taken by the troops from amongst the inhabitants in their march across an enemy country. The inhabitants of the commune will only serve as guides when compelled by force to do so.

Spies and Foreign Agents.—The communal authorities will put those under them on their guard against spies and foreign agents who will come into the country for the purpose either of collecting information about the National Army, or of stirring up demonstrations amongst the inhabitants, perhaps even in favour of the enemy.

It is obvious that all such demonstrations should be prevented and absolutely forbidden. The people must hold severely aloof from any demonstration that is not an expression of loyalty to their King and country. The presence of agents of this kind should be notified at once to the Belgian military chiefs and to the nearest civil authorities, and the agents themselves should be arrested and handed over to the authorities if they can be secured before the arrival of enemy troops.

Battle in the Commune.—If a battle takes place within the territory of the commune between enemy troops and Belgian troops, the communal authorities and the inhabitants will give their assistance to the National Army, but will abstain from any direct personal intervention in the battle, which would involve their being treated with greater severity than the soldiers.

The military operations and fighting will cause damage to private property, to the inhabitants and to the crops, which it is impossible to prevent. This must be borne as an inevitable consequence of the invasion. But beyond what is demanded by the necessities of attack and defence, private property can neither be destroyed nor seized. If any excess of this sort is committed the communal authorities have the right to make a sharp and formal protest to the military commanders who have ordered or allowed pillage or destruction.

The inhabitants will fulfil a duty of patriotism in giving aid as far as possible to the wounded during and after the battles. The communal authorities will undertake the organisation of this aid in co-operation with the doctors and the agents of the Red Cross. It will be impossible to object to public buildings being used as hospitals if that be indispensable. Places occupied by the wounded are entitled to respect from all the combatants, but it is strictly forbidden to abuse the distinctive marks of the Red Cross. Those marks consist of a Red Cross on a white flag or armlet.

Permanent Occupation.—The hostile army will probably occupy in a permanent way places situated on their lines of communication, and they will extend this occupation according to the requirements of military operations. A territory is only considered to be occupied which is in fact under the authority of the hostile army; this authority must be duly established, and capable of enforcing its will by reason of the absence of the National Army.

The State officials will only be able to carry out their duties so far as they are not prevented by the hostile authority. But the communal authorities must remain at their posts and continue the administration of the commune. They will only cease to do so if the occupying authority compels them to take an oath of allegiance to the enemy Power, or to engage in hostilities against their country, or to enter into some agreement which would not be in accord with their loyalty to the Belgian King and Government, which always remains their only legitimate Government.

The communal authorities will thus be necessarily in daily communication with the hostile authority. The latter, being in possession of power, will be bound to take all such measures as result from this position to secure order and the public life. The laws in force in the country will be applied; they can only be altered or abrogated when it is impossible to enforce them.

If any attacks are made by the enemy troops, either encamped or on the march, against the honour or rights of families, or against the life of individuals, or against private property, against religious beliefs or the exercise of public worship, the local authorities will communicate with the enemy authority with a view to putting an immediate end to all such attempts.

The Burgomaster will take particular care to maintain order and security in his commune. If necessary he will ask the hostile authorities to support him by force. If any reprehensible action be committed against the enemy, the communal authorities cannot be held answerable as a body, and collective penalties by fine or otherwise cannot be enforced on the whole population.

The court of Burgomaster and Aldermen will continue to collect the communal taxes, and will use them in defraying the cost of administration of the commune.

The army of occupation can only seize money, funds and bills due, and the arms and movable property of the State of such a nature as to be of use in warlike operations. The goods of the communes and religious, charitable, beneficent and educational establishments must be treated as private property, and consequently must be protected against confiscation or damage.

If the authorities of the enemy in occupation collect the taxes, dues or payments which belong by right to the State they must do so, as far as possible, in accordance with the regulations in force, and apply the receipts from these sources to such costs of administration as were formerly paid by the Belgian Government. They cannot make any other demands for money except for the needs of the army or the expenses of administration of the occupied territory, and that only on the written order of a general in command. Requisitions in kind for the requirements of the troops or requisitions for service allowed by the rules indicated above, can only be made on the authority of the commanding officer. They must not exceed the resources of the locality, nor involve the inhabitants in any obligation to take part in military operations against their own country. Under the latter heading would be classed any requisition for workmen to take part in erecting fortification works or assisting the operations of the hostile army.

If roads and bridges have been destroyed before the invasion in order to impede the movements of the hostile army, the inhabitants shall only assist in repairing them under compulsion.

Requisitioned supplies should be paid for as far as possible in cash, otherwise they should be, by the care of the Burgomasters, certified by receipts which should be settled in like manner as soon as possible.

During the occupation the railways, telegraphs and telephones will probably remain under the exclusive control of the enemy authorities, who will in such case reserve to themselves the right of deciding the conditions under which their use will be allowed to private individuals. The local authorities will not be allowed to interfere.

Burgomasters of occupied territory will remain in communication with the nearest authority of the National Government to such an extent as the invader will allow. In their official reports they will only deal with matters connected with their administrative duties, and will make no allusion to movements of hostile troops or do anything relating to military operations.

Where territory has been occupied by the enemy their authorities will be very severe in repressing espionage. The definition of a spy is one who secretly or under false pretences seeks to gather information within the zone of operations of a belligerent with a view to communicating such information to the opponent.

The suppression of espionage is very severe. The communal authorities must in their behaviour avoid giving any occasion for incurring this charge, but they should also bear in mind that the treatment meted out to spies can only be inflicted when secrecy is used in obtaining information. Soldiers and civilians who collect or report news, even within the zone of military operations, cannot be treated as spies so long as they do their business without disguising their character.

When the occupation ceases by the actual departure of the enemy authorities the communal authorities will notify forthwith the nearest Belgian military authorities.

During the occupation by the enemy the communal authorities will lose no opportunity of reminding those under them that the rules of conduct set forth above have for their sole end the alleviation of the burdens and hardships inevitably resulting from war and invasion; and that they must not be understood as implying any approval of this invasion, or releasing the people from their duty of loyalty to the legitimate Government, which remains in full force throughout the period of the war.

The Minister of the Interior,

PAUL BERRYER.

II.

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN M. CHARLES MAGNETTE, GRAND MASTER OF THE GRAND ORIENT OF BELGIUM, AND THE GRAND LODGES OF GERMANY ON THE QUESTION OF THE INSTITUTION OF AN INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY.

27th September, 1914.

BROTHER CHARLES MAGNETTE, GRAND MASTER OF THE GRAND ORIENT OF BELGIUM, TO THE
GRAND LODGES OF GERMANY.

Very dear and very illustrious Brothers,

The war which has thrown the whole of Europe into desolation at the present time and has filled the entire civilised world with anguish, and the painful and terrible events which are bound to follow it, must fill the heart of every Freemason with sorrow.

For if the Freemason is in duty bound to love and defend his threatened country, he is bound at the same time to look further and higher, and not to forget that he professes the religion of humanity, and that his ideal must be that amongst the peoples as amongst the races of mankind, all men, as in the Lodges, should be brothers.

With such sentiments as these I invite my German Brothers to regard the situation and to assist me in the task which I wish to attempt with them.

Most certainly the question as to who is responsible for the present war cannot be discussed; it is a question beyond the ability of Freemasonry to decide or even to approach, and it is open to Freemasons of the different countries concerned to believe with the most perfect sincerity that their own country is in the right.

But the point on which all Freemasons, without distinction, will and ought to agree is the importance, for the honour of all humanity, of avoiding the recurrence of these horrors, which all civilised men deplore, and secondly, the extreme desirability of discovering the circumstances in which these horrors have been perpetrated.

To arrive at this twofold end no institution is better qualified than Freemasonry.

I have therefore the honour of suggesting to you, in the first place, to make a pressing appeal and solemn invitation, as much to the civil population of belligerent countries as to the armies in the field, never to depart from the rules of humanity, of international law and the code of war.

Next, I shall ask you to be so good as to join me in setting up a Commission of Inquiry, to traverse the countries where the war has raged, or is in progress, to secure all useful information, and to make a report of its conclusions. This Commission would be composed of delegates of Grand Lodges belonging to neutral countries—for instance, a Dutch Brother, a Swiss and an Italian, and, naturally, also a German Mason and a Belgian Mason.

I am convinced that such a Commission would receive the most friendly assistance from the civil and military authorities of all the countries engaged in this regrettable contest in the furtherance of its mission.

I do not doubt, very dear and very illustrious Brothers, that you will appreciate the supremely and solely fraternal and humane thought which is my guide under these circumstances, and I feel confident that you will be willing to submit my proposal immediately to the proper Masonic authority to deal with it, and to let me know the decision made.

Firmly relying on a favourable decision and thanking you in advance, I beg you, very dear and very illustrious Brothers, to accept my most distinguished and most fraternal salutations,

CH. MAGNETTE.

Translation of the letter of the Lodge "Union":—

Darmstadt.

7th October, 1914.

TO THE GRAND MASTER OF THE GRAND ORIENT OF BELGIUM.

Most honoured and beloved Brother,

Your fraternal letter of the 27th of September, 1914, reached me in the early days of October at Frankfort. The views which you express at the opening of your letter do the greatest honour to your fraternal heart; I entirely agree with them. As regards the aim you have in view, I cannot place myself on your side. For where stand Belgian, French and English Freemasonry in this war which has been forced on us so criminally? We do not know what position it has taken up or what it has done to prevent the war. And even admitting that in truly Masonic fashion it endeavoured to oppose the war fury in its own countries, who amongst the unprincipled political leaders of those countries has either listened or wished to listen to it? Under these circumstances what can be gained by an appeal to the people of the countries at war or to their armies? The political gentlemen and the generals will do what they consider themselves entitled to do by iron necessity.

An exhortation to humanity, &c., addressed to our political leaders, our generals and our soldiers would be superfluous. They are Germans, and Germans are men even in the most violent conflict. And should German Brothers insult our men in the field and our responsible political groups by the doubt as to their humanity implicit in such an appeal as that you wish to make? Never would I consent to this. The Commission you desire to institute stands condemned, as far as I am concerned, by this suggestion. I have the most firm confidence in our armies, and the certainty that they will conduct with humanity the atrocious war which has been begun against us, and that our administrative organisations will establish order in a humane fashion in the country occupied by us. After the war it will be the duty, and the business, of Masonry to enlighten the people and to fill them with the spirit of Masonry more than ever, in order to prevent the return of times so horrible, and to avoid the possibility of beings ever again so degrading themselves, as, to our horror, we have been forced to see and hear notables and their subordinates do beyond our frontiers. Let us devote ourselves meantime everywhere to works of true human and divine love.

I remain, fully appreciating your good fraternal intentions. &c.,

WILHELM SÜSS.

Translation of the Note from Bayreuth:—

8th October.

Brother Magnette desires:—

1. To succeed in putting a stop to atrocities.
2. To learn and discover the circumstances in which these atrocities are committed.

This problem would in his opinion be settled by a pressing appeal or solemn injunction:—

1. To the cultured population of the countries at war.
2. To the armies in the field, that they should never derogate from the laws of humanity, international law, or the code of war.

Brother Magnette thinks that we might arrive at a practical solution of this problem by the formation of a Committee of Inquiry, which shall traverse the districts where the war has raged or is in progress, and make a report of the conclusions arrived at.

Such is the purport of his letter.

The wish there expressed is evidently founded on Masonic views and purposes, but the question presents itself, whether these are capable of being realised at present—that is to say, whether they can be put practically into execution. To the present solution of this problem dangerous currents are opposed, for we know that the atrocities committed by our enemies in the East and in the West are attributable to the direct orders of officers of high rank, or to the incitements of fanatical priests. Consequently I consider it impossible to intervene effectively at present; moreover, the possibility of this Commission being suspected of espionage cannot be excluded. Brother Magnette believes that such a Commission would meet with the friendly assistance of the civil and military authorities. This is a bold conviction, to which judgment born of calm reflection is opposed.

For the rest, we know that our troops have committed no cruelties. The severe and pitiless measures which from time to time had to be taken up to the present were provoked by the conduct of the enemy population. What are cruelties in time of war? Surely not the measures imposed by hard necessity on our troops against the *francs-tireurs* and their haunts? Cruelties have been committed by the Belgians, the French, and the Russians, when they mutilated the defenceless wounded, and buried them alive, and when they assassinated women and children without cause and burned villages.

Cruelties have been committed by these nations as a whole when they made use of dum-dum bullets and employed the white flag treacherously. We know too well the discipline of our German soldiers to believe them capable of such actions. Unhappily they are accused of these cruelties, the lying reports of English and French newspapers see to that. Even the Queen of the Belgians, a Bavarian Princess, has accused our troops of atrocities, and has made a complaint to the President of the American Republic. She knew of these accusations only from the newspapers in question, the reports of our Headquarters Staff and of our newspapers not having been communicated to the inhabitants in Belgium; the lie continues to survive, and at last finds general belief. Let Brother Magnette ask the wounded or the prisoners fallen into the hands of the Germans if they have any reason to protest against the cruelty of the Germans. The considerations of our Belgian Brother undoubtedly rest on such lying reports of the English and French newspapers, otherwise he would have in the first place addressed himself to the English and French Lodges to request them to preach the laws of humanity. If Brother Magnette can charge our German soldiers with a single case of useless cruelty or atrocity we shall feel bound to unite in a common Masonic task. In the first place, Brother Magnette must be made to understand that his views about the German troops and their conduct, so far as the rules of humanity are concerned, rest on erroneous information. It will truly be no ungrateful task if the Lodge in this manner is the means of combating the horrifying falsehoods of our adversaries.

In spite of my liveliest and sincerest wish that our troops may be always animated with humanity and equity in the worst situations and may prove in the enemy country that German Culture has struck healthy roots in all classes of our people, I should avoid recommending kind feeling or goodness of heart to our troops as things are at present. The attitude and the perfidious conduct of our enemies do not deserve it.

KESSELRING.

Grand Lodge "Zur Sonne,"

Bayreuth,

8th October, 1914.

Brother Charles Magnette, Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Belgium, to the respected Grand Lodges of the German Empire:—

Very dear and very illustrious Brothers,

The letter which I had the honour to address under date of the 27th September ulto, to the nine Grand Lodges of Germany has brought me two replies; the one from the Grand Lodge of Darmstadt, the other from the Grand Lodge of Bayreuth. The first assumes the form of a fraternal letter, the second constitutes a simple note of objection. Both decline the proposal of which I made myself the mouthpiece. I have every reason to believe that all the Masonic authorities in Germany to whom I addressed my appeal have received it, because it must have reached them through the kind intervention of the German Consulate at Liège, and of our very dear Brother Bangel of Frankfort-on-Main, to whom I desire to express my thanks for its transmission.

I can only therefore consider the silence of the seven Grand Lodges who have not thought fit to reply to me as a refusal of the proposals contained in my letter, and act accordingly.

I shall consider also that the reasons stated by the two Grand Lodges which have been good enough to reply to me, are likewise those which have decided the others to give me the tacit refusal indicated by their silence.

It is my duty to examine these reasons and to point out to our German Brothers how feeble the arguments are with which they oppose me.

First of all I should thank my illustrious colleagues of the Grand Lodges of Darmstadt and Bayreuth for being good enough to recognise that my proposal was solely dictated by sincere and profound Masonic sentiments.

It only remains, therefore, for me to rebut the practical motives which prevent their converting these sentiments into external and effective action.

They ask me what was the position of the Masonic Bodies of Belgium, England and France at the moment when the execrable war was let loose on Germany.

Evidently this is not the place or time to discuss if this deplorable war was let loose by Germany or against her. Let it suffice for me to say, without wishing to pronounce officially on this grave question, that the violation of Belgian neutrality was foretold years ago, that the military authorities looked upon it as inevitable, and that many Germans thought that, if the war was not made at present, the increase of the military power of Russia, of France, and even of little Belgium, would in the near future have made the struggle more than doubtful for the German Empire.

I might further recall how Germany was unwilling to agree to the proposal of a Conference of the European Powers intended to settle the dispute between Austro-Hungary and Serbia, the aggravation of which has been the occasion, if not the cause, of the colossal international conflict which at this moment is convulsing the whole universe.

But the field of discussion is not there, and I do not wish to indicate anything further in this order of ideas ; I intend to take my stand on ground purely Masonic.

I have, then, nothing to reply as to the attitude of English Masonry or French Masonry.

As Grand Master of Belgian Freemasonry, I solemnly and sincerely declare that it has always and with all its powers contended against this abominable scourge of war.

In our political councils Freemasonry has no direct action, no more indeed, I know, than in the countries of the Empire.

And could it have made a serious influence felt, even in the impossible event that such influence could be exercised in a direction contrary to the unanimous will of the Belgian nation, yet the suddenness of events would have hindered it from attempting any such effort with any hope of success.

One must not forget that Belgian Freemasonry every year celebrates in solemn union the Festival of Peace in commemoration of the first Hague Conference.

One must not forget that first among the Masonic Powers the Grand Orient of Belgium had decided to be officially represented at the international Masonic meeting for peace, which should have been held this year from the 11th to the 19th of August at Frankfort-on-Main, and to which more than sixty Grand Masters of German Lodges had given their approval.

For the rest, I do not know whether discussions have arisen on the subject of the respective attitude of the adversaries in English, French or German territory, and it is in poor Belgium that those excesses and atrocities which have stirred my heart as man and Mason have been committed.

I have no doubt, then, though having no right to bind them in this respect, that English and French Masons are quite inclined to assist in a serious and impartial inquiry into facts that have astounded the civilised world.

It is on the facts themselves, on their respective gravity and on the responsibility of their authors that disagreement arises.

I had hoped, and still think, that this disagreement would have been removed by the acceptance of my proposals.

As a fact, I remark that you consider it settled and firmly established that the responsibility for all regrettable incidents that have happened, as well as for the war itself, falls on the enemies of Germany.

Now, the whole question turns on this ; it is not settled even by energetic assertion ; it remains to be decided.

I doubt not for a single instant your conviction nor the sincerity of your assertions, but I wish simply to say this :—

You have not seen, you have not heard.

You have trusted to allegations, to narratives, to the reports of the newspapers.

You have only heard one voice, one bell, one sound.

And you have made your decision. Do you not know, however, that the good judge does not decide or give judgment until he has heard all the parties in the case ?

Do not believe that we here are obsessed or deceived by the Press of allied countries.

First, the newspapers of that Press reach us seldom and with difficulty, and, secondly, the organs of the German Press circulate and are read freely in our country.

We have, then, the materials for comparison, for criticism, and for judgment.

And yet I do not wish to give judgment. I do not wish to pronounce sentence of condemnation.

He who writes these lines has himself seen, has himself heard, with his own ears, he himself knows of his own knowledge.

And yet he reserves his judgment, he asks only one thing; it is that light may be shed on the matter by means of bilateral testimony, a light impartial, clear, complete, everywhere, leaving nothing, no action, in the shade.

Why refuse this light?

Do you not fear to hear it said that you did not wish for it because you were afraid of it?

You tell me, too, that you do not believe German soldiers capable of the excesses alleged against them. Of course we respect your conviction on this point; yet once more, since there are assertions and evidence in the opposite sense, why not assist in the easy task of verifying your case, and so establishing beyond possibility of dispute the innocence of your soldiers, which you believe would be the result?

As for me, I have no fear that either side would charge the Commission undertaking these investigations and verifications with espionage; the character of the men selected and their word of honour will answer for their discretion.

Nor could the exhortations addressed to the troops in the field be regarded as an offence.

Everyone knows alas! that war inevitably provokes the worst violence, so that the best and mildest of men in the intoxication of war gave way to excesses which they would never commit in cold blood or in ordinary civil life. Besides, this appeal to the humanity of combatants and the civil population would have been addressed to all without distinction, and the universality of the appeal would have relieved it of any offensive character, even if such could ever have been attributed to it.

To conclude, it remains for me to examine one last point of view which you have advanced in order to declare my proposal unacceptable.

Just as you think it impossible for German troops to have given themselves up to atrocity, pillage and devastation, so also you are certain that the Belgian people have committed against these troops a series of acts of barbarism and cruelty such as those you have quoted in your reply.

In my turn I must protest against accusations which tend to represent my fellow countrymen as savage and barbarous beings. On the contrary, our people are, on the whole, laborious, simple, worthy, honest and good. Devotion and compassion are the predominant characteristics of the working class as well as of the higher ranks of society. Of this there are abundant proofs.

Crime is not more prevalent than in other countries—the reverse is the case.

As to sharpshooters and *francs-tireurs*, they exist only in the imagination of those whose interest it was to induce belief in them.

That some non-military Belgian citizens, little versed in the laws and customs of war, seeing from one hour to another their country invaded, their goods and persons threatened, before the public authorities had even time to instruct them as to the recommendations and orders relating to a state of war, or that some others, belonging to the Civic Guard, but not on active service, and not provided with uniforms or distinctive badges, have made use of arms against the German Regulars, I am not prepared to deny, any more than I intend to admit it.

But the fact is possible and explicable. The whole question is, if these incidents really happened, whether they were so frequent or so serious as to justify the terrible reprisals which they have provoked.

May I not remind you that in a great country, the neighbour and ally of your own, a captain of a band of sharpshooters has become a national hero, and that Austro-Hungary has raised a statue to Andreas Hofer in one of the principal cities of the Empire? That an admirable picture, reproduced by the hundreds of thousands throughout Germany, represents Andreas Hofer at the head of his peasants, creeping, gun in hand, to surprise the enemy? That Germany had also her Andreas Hofer? That though Napoleon I. took severe measures of repression, one might have supposed that in a century the code of war had been humanised?

However it may be, these inquiries would have been within the sphere of the proposed Commission.

This Commission would have also been able to investigate the alleged acts of cruelty of which the civil population of my country has been accused.

We should thus have got rid of the vague accusations, destitute of proofs and precision, which have been uttered against the Belgian people, and we should have been able either to refute the calumnies or to ascertain and censure the acts committed.

But until such acts have been proved you will understand that the Belgian people protests against, and is indignant at these legends of eyes put out, of breasts cut off, of wounded put to death, of doctors or of Sisters of Charity basely assassinated, etc., etc.

Already, indeed, it seems that truth begins to dawn, and to relegate to the shade these idle yet tragic tales which would make one smile, had they not cost so much in tears and blood.

For instance, in addition to certain timid reservations of the German Press, we have the protest of the great Dutch newspaper, *De Tijd*, which, in its number of the 27th October, reproducing an article of the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, treats as an old legend (*oude fabel*) the stories that tell of German soldiers having their eyes put out in Belgium. And *De Tijd* reproduces the certificate

of the celebrated professor, Dr. Kuhnt, the well-known oculist of Bonn, who declares that he has never discovered a single case of the kind in his clinic, in spite of the fact that one individual went about declaring that he had himself seen in this very clinic twenty soldiers deprived of sight in this way.

And nearer to us, a few days ago a German doctor of the highest authority, the Oberstabsarzt Müller, made in his turn a declaration which it is important to bring to light. Addressing the meeting on the occasion of the closing of the field-hospital organised at Liège by the Jesuit Fathers, he acknowledged that when he arrived in Belgium he was inspired by prejudices, suspicions, and fears that he had contracted by reading the newspapers and by the stories that had been reported. But, he added, these prejudices were quickly dissipated, and he was able and in duty bound to render homage to the devotion and charity with which the Belgians had treated all the wounded who had been entrusted to their care, without distinction of nationality.

Such evidence, the value of which no one can dispute, publicly given, is worth more than all the reports, so often sensational and false, issued by the newspapers, and clears my fellow citizens of the ill-considered charges to which they have been subjected.

But yet again, I do not require that our mere word should be accepted. I only ask strenuously that all the allegations against us should be verified, scrutinised, checked, and that a judgment should be pronounced before which all the world will bow.

For you tell me that if I could interview the prisoners detained in Germany I should be assured of the humane sentiments of the Germans, and of the kindly treatment they give their prisoners. Well, I beg you to believe that I have made such inquiries, that I have had the opportunity of reading the letters of prisoners, heard the stories of those who have been able to see them, and that if truth obliges me to acknowledge that many have no ground for complaint of the manner in which they are treated, truth also authorises me to assert that many make the most lively complaints on this head.

For the last time I repeat, I wish to compel no one to believe it.

But why then oblige us to accept as proven statements which we have the gravest reasons to believe incorrect?

I must ask pardon for the length of this letter; I have felt bound to note with Masonic freedom all that appeared open to criticism in the two answers which have been sent me.

I have no great confidence that my arguments will alter what, if not the opinion, is at least the decision of the authorised organs of German Freemasonry.

But it is a Masonic duty to say what one thinks, because sooner or later truth always prevails.

In concluding his letter, my revered colleague of the Grand Lodge of Bayreuth declares that he could not recommend mercy, kindness, or moderation to the German troops, because the attitude of their enemies would not allow him to do so.

I keenly regret such a manner of thinking. Kindness and humanity are characteristics highly Masonic, which must not be practised only to those who possess and reveal the same sentiments.

As for me, I can truly say that, if the war were carried into enemy territory, we should make every effort to ensure that the evils and rigours of war should be tempered as far as possible, and that all soldiers and civilians should respect the grand principles of kindness, equity, justice and humanity to which my Grand Orient and my Lodges remain immovably faithful.

Please accept, very dear and very illustrious Brothers, the expression of my fraternal sentiments,

CH. MAGNETTE.

P.S.—I think it will be useful and interesting to enclose in the present letter the text of the proclamation issued by the Grand Orient of Belgium on the day after the opening of hostilities, and an article of the newspaper *De Tijd*, of the date of November 13th, reporting the words of Oberstabsarzt Müller, which I mentioned above.

They tell me that other newspapers have also mentioned these incidents, but I have not been able to verify this personally.

I also append to my letter an extract from an article of the celebrated publicist, Maximilian Harden, a German, who strongly asserts that it was Germany who desired and sought for the war.

III.

LETTER OF M. A. DEWINNE, EDITOR OF THE PAPER "LE PEUPLE," SHEWING UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES THE OFFER OF AN IMPARTIAL INQUIRY AS TO THE ATROCITIES COMMITTED IN BELGIUM BY THE GERMAN ARMIES HAS BEEN ON THREE OCCASIONS REFUSED BY THE GERMAN SOCIALISTS.

Havre,
31st January, 1916.

TO M. HENRY CARTON DE WIART, MINISTER OF JUSTICE, SAINTE-ADRESSE.
M. le Ministre,

In the journal *L'Humanité*, of the 24th October, 1914, I published an account of several visits made successively by four social democratic deputies to the *Maison du Peuple* at Brussels,

between the 20th August and the 30th September, that is to say, during the first weeks of the German occupation. I was present at the second meeting, which was held in the Council Chamber of the Co-operative Society. The other information which I have thought it my duty to make public was communicated to me by persons fully authorised by the Belgian Labour Party, who will give their names as soon as they are at liberty to do so.

One of the conversations which took place at this time between Belgians and Germans, appears to me to be of interest to the Commission on the violation of international law. It refers to a proposal for an impartial inquiry into the German crimes in Belgium, made by members of the Labour Party to Deputies Noske, of Chemnitz, and Dr. Koster, of Hamburg.

I related this incident in *L'Humanité* in the following words :—

“We did not expect the resistance of Belgium. We believe that civilians have fired on the German soldiers. The German Press has described numerous atrocities committed by Belgians. At Cologne especially there are officers whose eyes were put out and whose throats were cut. At Antwerp and at Brussels German subjects were tortured and assassinated (!)”

“The comrades of the *Maison du Peuple* protested strongly against these calumnies, and they were astounded that the Socialists should echo the tales and lies of the Pan-Germanist Press. And when in their turn they mentioned the numerous acts of brigandage and the crimes of the German soldiery in Belgium, those who were conversing with them promised to make an inquiry.

“This inquiry, we suggested, should be impartial. The reply was evasive. They would see later, etc., etc.”

On the 16th December *L'Humanité* mentioned that it had received from “two persons authorised by the Belgian Labour Party,” a written account of discussions that had taken place between the Belgian and German Socialists. And it began the same day to publish this document, which it described as “moving and strong.” The second part of this report, which appeared the following day, 17th December, confirmed the information I had supplied to the Socialist paper as to the offer of an inquiry made to Noske and Dr. Koster.

These are its terms :—

“So far as concerns the atrocities committed in Belgium, the two visitors blindly adopted the statement of the German Government: The sack of Visé, the burning of Louvain, of Auvclais, of Tamines, the destruction of Dinant, of Aerschot, etc., were only the just punishments of attacks committed by the Belgian civilians on the German troops; according to them, it was demonstrated that at Louvain, notably, the civilians had fired on the hindmost troops because they knew that it was amongst them that the Headquarters Staff would be found; the officers who commanded at Louvain at the time of the fire were officers of the Reserve, men belonging to the most cultivated class in Germany: lawyers, jurists, professors, men altogether incapable of committing the least atrocity without being provoked thereto by the attitude of the population.

“The question as to how these men of “high culture” had allowed the burning of the Library of the University of Louvain, the Cathedral, the hospital, etc., remained unanswered.

“The offer of an impartial inquiry, where both sides should be heard in some localities, was not accepted.

“It will be remembered that Van Kol, the Dutch Socialist Senator, subsequently also invited the *Parteivorstand* to make an inquiry throughout the country on the subject of the devastations committed, and that this offer was declined.”

Finally, the third part of the Report of the two Belgian Socialists goes on to shew that a proposal of inquiry was also made by the President of the Socialist Party in Holland, M. Vliegen, to the Social Democrat Deputy, Scheidemann, who had been received at Amsterdam by the governing board of the party, with whom were associated the editorial staff of the paper *Het Volk*, and the governing board of the *Nederlandsch Vakverbond*.

“The delegate of the *Parteivorstand*,” says the report, “was very coldly received, and the defence of the attitude of the Socialist fraction that he presented found no echo there. One of Scheidemann’s arguments consisted in saying that thousands of letters had been received by the governing body of the party begging it not to vote against the credits, so as not to break up the workmen’s organisations. He also declined an offer made by the President of the Party, Citizen Vliegen, to make with him an inquiry into the earliest atrocities committed in Belgium by the German troops, by visiting and interrogating on the spot the Belgian refugees at Maestricht. He considered this personal inquiry useless, as the German Minister of the Interior had decided to undertake it.”

Thus, then, the offer of an impartial inquiry has been thrice declined by the German Socialists :

1. That made at the *Maison du Peuple* of Brussels to the deputies Noske and Koster.
2. That addressed by the Dutch Socialist, Senator van Kol, to the *Parteivorstand* itself.
3. That proposed by M. Vliegen to M. Scheidemann.

My part being here simply that of a witness, I confine myself to notifying these facts, begging you at the same time to be good enough to bring them to the knowledge of the Commission of Inquiry, and I abstain from any comments.

Please accept, M. le Ministre, the assurance of my very high regard,

AUG. DEWINNE.

IV.

LETTER ADDRESSED TO BARON BEYENS, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (AD INTERIM)
BY DR. DEPAGE, PROFESSOR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BRUSSELS, CHIEF DOCTOR
OF THE BELGIAN ARMY, PROTESTING AGAINST THE ALLEGATIONS OF DR.
MAMLOCK WITH REFERENCE TO THE HOSPITAL ESTABLISHMENTS OF THE RED
CROSS OF BELGIUM.

La Panne,
28th December, 1915.

M. le Ministre,

In a publication entitled *Kriegsärztliche Vorträge*, published in 1915 by the firm of Gustav Fischer, at Jena, Dr. Mamlock reproduces a lecture that he has given at Berlin under the title *Die Deutsche Medizinal Verwaltung in Belgien*. The author in this article ostentatiously glorifies the efforts made by the German doctors in Belgium to establish a suitable medical and hygienic organisation. A part of his work is particularly devoted to the hospitals, and for the purpose of clearly indicating the extent of the work accomplished, Dr. Mamlock draws a parallel between the hospital establishments before the occupation and those of to-day.

So far as concerns the establishments made by Belgian doctors, the allegations of the author are false, and made with the bad faith habitual to the Germans as we all know them to-day.

As I was asked to direct the Red Cross at Brussels from the opening of hostilities, you will perhaps think it well that I should state the actual facts.

I shall not deal with all the inaccuracies contained in the lecture of Dr. Mamlock; I shall examine simply the conditions in which the Red Cross Society worked at the beginning of the war, and especially at Brussels.* I presided over the installation of all the field hospitals of Brussels. I lived with the Germans for nearly two months and a half, and I am glad to think that those of their doctors with whom I associated will not contradict me. When war was declared a great number of committees were established for providing field hospitals under the protection of the Red Cross. The hospitals of Brussels and its suburbs put their staff and their premises at their disposal. The Directors of the Red Cross were very exacting, and decided not to accept any field hospital which did not comply with the following conditions:—

1. Minimum of 50 beds.
2. Medical staff, with sufficient attendants, and responsible surgeon-in-chief.
3. Perfect installation in every respect.

To this end a delegate of the Red Cross made an inspection of each field hospital before affiliation to the Red Cross, and those which did not fulfil the required conditions were not accepted. I myself made the greater number of these inspections, and I shall not surprise you, M. le Ministre, when I tell you that I was extremely severe in the task confided to me.

In eight days more than 100 field hospitals, containing altogether nearly 10,000 beds, were installed in the hospitals of Brussels and its suburbs, in the schools, the private institutes, and the premises of big commercial establishments. As I said above, these installations were perfect from every point of view, as regards cleanliness and hygiene, and their medical service. They were at work regularly up to the moment when the Germans made their entry into Brussels on the 20th August, 1914.

During the first days of the occupation I made, with one of my colleagues, an application to the German military authorities for information as to their intentions with regard to the medical service, and asked them especially whether they were prepared to leave the Belgian Red Cross to act as before, or if they had the intention of dispensing with its services. It was decided that an inspection should be made of the different field hospitals, under the direction of the German medical service. This inspection gave every satisfaction, and it was agreed

* Dr. Mamlock, in his lecture, expressed himself particularly as follows:—

“Even in a town like Brussels our sanitary service had to make a complete cleansing of certain Belgian hospitals to such a point that new W.C.’s had to be built, those that existed being altogether unusable. In Brussels and its suburbs one single hospital alone really came up to our requirements, that is the civil hospital at Schaerbeek, which is situated in one of the suburbs of the town. The military hospitals, and above all the temporary hospitals, had to be submitted to a complete renewal on our part. That was done completely, and it is remarkable that some colleagues who until then were only good ordinary practitioners, revealed themselves as organisers of the first order,

“The hospitals in Belgium have been provided by us with everything which our good hospitals have. There is no want there of baths, of radiographic installations or of gymnasia. It is needless for me to insist on this here. I have published articles on this subject in No. 4 of the *Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift*, under the title of *Brief aus Belgien*, and also in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of the 7th and 10th January (Nos. 12 and 17).

“Some of the hospitals only possess installations for septic operations, for these are generally the only operations they have to perform. However, the majority have also theatres for aseptic operations, and it was particularly difficult to instal these in the ancient convents, where premises which had the necessary light, electricity or gas, did not exist.

“But all that was done, and if you were to visit these premises you would not suppose that for more than a hundred years they had been devoted to the pious exercises of religious orders.”

that the Belgian field hospitals at Brussels should continue to operate as in the past, under the management of the Belgian Red Cross, but under the control of the German medical authorities. With this object the Director of the Medical Department of the German army at Brussels regularly attended our meetings.

In spite of this agreement, the managers of the German medical service decided after a fortnight to take over on its own account the hospital at Schaerbeek. They turned out of it all the sick civilians, and forbade our Belgian doctors, who, however, had given proof of the greatest devotion to the care of the wounded without distinction of nationality, to enter it. Some days later the Germans installed a field hospital in the Library of the Palace of the Academies, which hitherto had not been used for this purpose ; they took over next the military hospital, and in the fourth place the Carbineers barracks. From this time they sent no more wounded to the hospitals directed by the Belgian Red Cross, except to the field hospital of the Palais Royal, which still received them for a certain space of time.

The military hospital is a hospital built to contain 500 beds. The Germans installed there 700 beds. For this purpose they were obliged to fit up the storerooms and attics, to which the Belgian soldiers were relegated. At the hospital of Schaerbeek the number of beds was also raised from 500 to 700. The Library of the Palace of the Academies is not suitable for a field hospital ; it had been offered to us at the beginning of the war and refused. Finally, the Baudouin barracks (the barracks of the Carbineers) had been appropriated by us as a medical field hospital ; but the Germans, on their arrival at Brussels, had taken possession of it for quarters for their troops during the early days of the occupation, and this in spite of the Red Cross emblems. Later, when they installed a hospital there, they were naturally obliged to make a thorough cleansing of the premises, which, moreover, were in no way suitable for a surgical field hospital.

One can readily understand that under these conditions the wounded cared for at Brussels under German control had reason for complaint, but it is proper to attribute the fault to the system of organisation established by the Germans.

The hospital of Schaerbeek, which Dr. Mamlock considers the only suitable establishment at Brussels, was very far from being the best installed field hospital. The field hospital of the Palais Royal, those of the hospital of St. John, and the hospital of St. Gilles, the field hospitals installed in the very up-to-date premises of the Brussels urban schools were from every point of view superior to it. I cannot wish for any better confirmation of this than the opinion of Dr. Korte of Berlin, who, in an article which appeared in the *Münchener Medizinische Wochenschrift* (October, 1914), was good enough to acknowledge that the field hospitals created in Brussels by the Belgian Red Cross were installed in a perfect manner, and who regretted the prejudice shown by the German doctors in not sending the wounded to them.

Besides, all the German doctors with whom I was in touch at Brussels were unanimous in acknowledging that the care given to their wounded by the Belgian doctors was beyond reproach : on many occasions they bore witness to this in their acknowledgments to the Committee of the Red Cross.

But, M. le Ministre, if the wounded, whether German or Belgian, were properly looked after by our doctors, allow me to say that the same is not the case with regard to the care taken of the wounded Belgians by the German doctors.

In fact, it is not possible to transform a hospital arranged for 500 beds at the outside into a hospital for 700 beds, as the Germans have done with the military hospital and the hospital at Schaerbeek, without interfering with the sanitation and the successful treatment of the wounded.

For the rest, the German doctors have gone so far as to relegate, as I said above, the Belgian wounded to the attics and outhouses. I have seen for myself these chance installations, and have been painfully impressed.

It is not surprising that there have been numberless criticisms and bitter complaints by the wounded in this connection. To avoid all supervision, entrance to the German hospitals was very soon forbidden to doctors or persons of Belgian nationality, so that numbers of our fellow countrymen have died in Brussels without receiving a last visit from the members of their family.

Besides, the German doctors took no very great care of their own wounded ; I was able to take note of the attention given them in certain field hospitals.

I have seen the severely wounded receive no attention, the doctors thinking it was better to let them die. The question of humanity does not influence them, utility is their only guide.

To conclude, M. le Ministre, I may tell you that the military authorities employed the trucks which had served for the transport of horses in Belgium for the purpose of removing their wounded to Germany ; this simple statement is sufficient to explain the great number of cases of tetanus noted at Verviers and at Aix-la-Chapelle at the beginning of the war.

Hoping that these lines will assist you in confuting the calumnies spread abroad from various quarters against us in Germany, I beg you, M. le Ministre, to accept the assurance of my most distinguished regard,

DR. DEPAGE.

V.

PASTORAL LETTER OF H. E. CARDINAL MERCIER, ARCHBISHOP OF MALINES,
ON PATRIOTISM AND ENDURANCE.

Malines,

*Christmas, 1914.**

My well beloved Brethren,

It would be impossible for me to tell you to what extent the remembrance of you has remained present with me during these months of suffering and mourning, through which we have just passed. I had to leave you hurriedly on the 20th of August in order to go and pay my last respects to the venerable and beloved Pope, whom we have just lost, and to fulfil a conscientious obligation from which I could not free myself in the election as successor to Pius X. of the Pontiff, who to-day rules the Church under the name, full of promise and hope, of Benedict XV.

At Rome too I heard (blow after blow), of the partial destruction of the Collegiate Church of Louvain, the burning of the library and scientific establishments of our great University, the destruction of the town, the shootings, the tortures inflicted on women, on children and on defenceless men. And whilst I was still shuddering at these horrors, the telegraphic agencies announced to us the bombardment of our beautiful metropolitan Church, of the Church of Notre Dame beyond the Dyle, of the Episcopal Palace and of important quarters of our dear city of Malines.

Far from my diocese, without means of communication with you, I was obliged to concentrate my grief in my soul, and to carry it with the remembrance of you, which never left me, to the foot of the Cross.

And this thought sustained my courage and was a light to me : a catastrophe overwhelms the world, said I to myself, and our dear little Belgium, though so faithful to God in the mass of its population, so bold in its patriotism, so great in its King and in its Government, is the first victim thereof. It bleeds, its sons fall by thousands in our forts, on the battlefields, to defend its right and the integrity of its territory ; soon there will no longer be on Belgian soil one single family not in mourning : Wherefore, oh my God, all these sorrows ? Lord, Lord, hast Thou forsaken us ?

Then I beheld my crucifix ; I contemplated Jesus, the sweet and humble Lamb of God, wounded, clothed in His blood as in a tunic, and I thought I heard fall from His lips the words which the Psalmist utters in his name : " My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me ? Why art Thou so far from helping me and from the words of my complaints ? "†

And the murmur stayed itself on my lips, and I thought of what our Divine Saviour said in the Gospel : " The disciple is not above his master nor the servant above his lord."‡ The Christian is the disciple of a God who became man to suffer and to die. To resist suffering, to rebel against Providence, because it allows suffering and mourning, is to forget our origin, the school in which we were formed, the example which each of us bears enshrined in his name of Christian, which he honours at his hearth, contemplates on the altar before which he prays, and desires on the tomb where he must sleep his last sleep.

My dearly beloved brethren, we shall return presently to the providential law of suffering, but you will not deny that, if it has pleased a God made man, holy, innocent, without spot, to suffer and die for us sinners, guilty, perhaps even criminal, it suits us ill to complain, though we have to endure ; the truth is that any catastrophe in the world, inasmuch as it attacks creatures only, is not to be compared to that which our sins have caused and of which God Himself was willing on Calvary to be the innocent victim.

Having recalled this fundamental truth, I feel myself more justified in inviting you to look the situation, in which we are all involved, in the face, and in speaking to you without ambiguity of our duties as well as our hopes.

I sum up these duties in two words : Patriotism and Endurance.

PATRIOTISM.

My very dear brethren, I aspired to make myself the interpreter of the gratitude which animates us, you and me, to whom age, social situation and circumstances give the benefit of the heroism of others, without our direct and positive participation therein.

When, after my return from Rome, I first of all went to Havre to salute the wounded Belgians, French, and English ; when later at Malines, at Louvain, at Antwerp, I was privileged to press the hands of those brave men, who carried a bullet in their bodies or a wound on their faces for

* It should be noted on the subject of the number of civilians killed and houses burnt in Belgium that the figures known at the end of the year 1914 and given in the Pastoral Letter, are considerably below the truth (*Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.*)

† Psalm xxii, 1.

‡ Matthew x, 24.

having marched to the assault on the enemy or sustained the shock of his attacks, there came spontaneously to my lips a word of lively gratitude to them : " My brave friends," said I to them, " it is for us, for each one of us, for me, that you have exposed your life and that you suffer. I must tell you of my respect, my gratitude, and assure you that the whole country knows what it owes to you."

In fact, it is our soldiers who are our saviours.

The first time, at Liège, they saved France ; a second time, in Flanders, they checked the march of the enemy towards Calais ; France and England acknowledge it, and Belgium appears to them to-day, and to the whole world besides, as a land of heroes. Never in my life did I feel so proud of being a Belgian as when, after traversing the French railways, making a stay in Paris, and visiting London, I was everywhere a witness of the enthusiastic admiration of our Allies for the heroism of our army. Our King is, in the estimation of all, at the very top of the moral ladder ; he is the only man, without doubt, who does not know it, whilst, like the plainest of soldiers, he passes through the trenches and encourages by the serenity of his smile those of whom he demands that they shall feel no doubt of their country.

The first duty of every Belgian citizen at the present hour is gratitude to our army.

If a man had saved you from shipwreck or fire you would feel bound to him by a debt of eternal gratitude.

It is not one man ; it is 250,000 who fight, suffer, fall for you, so that you may remain free, so that Belgium may preserve its independence, its dynasty, its patriotic union, and that after the vicissitudes that unfold themselves on the field of battle, it may rise again nobler, prouder, purer, more glorious than ever.

Pray always, my brethren, for these 250,000 men and for the chiefs who lead them to victory ; pray for our brothers in arms ; pray for those who have fallen ; pray for those who strive still ; pray for the recruits who are preparing themselves for the struggle of to-morrow.

In your name I send them from here our salute of brotherly sympathy and the assurance that not only do we pray for the success of their arms and for the eternal salvation of their souls, but that we accept for their sake all that there is painful, physically and morally, to us, in our present state of oppression, and all that the future may have in store for us of temporary humiliation, anguish, and grief.

In the day of the final victory we shall all share in the honour ; it is just that to-day we should all share in the suffering.

From certain echoes which have reached me it seems that in certain spheres where the population has suffered least, bitter words have occasionally been uttered against God, which if they had been coldly calculated would have been almost blasphemous.

Oh ! I understand only too well the revolt of the natural instinct against the evils which have burst upon Catholic Belgium ; the spontaneous cry of the conscience is always that success may reward virtue on the spot, and that injustice may be immediately suppressed.

But the ways of God are not our ways, says the Scripture ; Providence gives free course, during the interval that its Wisdom has measured, to the play of human passions and to the conflict of interests. God is patient because He is eternal. The last word, that of mercy, is for those who have faith in love. " Why art thou cast down, O my soul ? and why art thou disquieted in me ? " *Quare tristis es, anima mea, et quare conturbas me ?* " Hope in the Lord, for I shall yet praise Him." Is He not thy Saviour and thy God. *Spera in Des, quoniam adhuc confitebor illi, salutare vultus mei et Deus meus.**

When the holy man Job, whom God designed to offer as a model of constancy to future generations, had been deprived by Satan in swift succession of his goods, his children, and his health, his friends defiled before him, scorning him, and incited him to revolt, his wife suggested to him thoughts of blasphemy and imprecation. " Dost thou still retain thy integrity ? " she said to him ; " curse God and die."† Only the man of God was unshakable in his faith. " Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh," he replied. " What ! shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil ? " He is the Master. " The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord." *Dominus dedit, Dominus abstulit ; sicut Domino placuit ita factum est. Sit nomen Domini benedictum.‡* Experience proved that the holy man was right ; it pleased the Lord to reward here below his faithful servant ; He restored to him double of all that had been taken from him, and out of regard to him showed mercy to his friends.§

There is no one perhaps who knows more than I do of what my poor country has suffered. And no Belgian, I hope, will doubt the response to all these troubles in my soul both as citizen and bishop. These four last months seem to me to have lasted a century. Our brave men have been mown down by thousands—their wives, their mothers mourn for the absent, whom they will never see again ; homesteads are unoccupied, poverty increases, anguish is poignant. At Malines, at Antwerp, I have known the population of two great cities delivered over to the pangs of death, the one during a continuous bombardment of six, the other of 34 hours. I have traversed the greater part of the most devastated districts of the diocese : Duffel, Lierre, Berlaer, St. Rambaut,

* Psalm xlii., 5.

† *Dixit autem illi uxor sua : adhuc tu permanes in simplicitate tua ! Benedic Deo et morere* (Job ii., 9).

‡ Job ii., 10 ; i., 21.

§ Job xli., 8-10.

Konings-Hoycht, Mortsel, Waelhem, Muysen, Wavre-Ste.-Catherine, Wavre-Notre-Dame, Sempst, Werde, Eppenheim, Hofstade, Elewytt, Rymenam, Boortmeerbeek, Wespelaer, Haecht, Werchter-Wackerzeel, Rotselaer, Tremeloo, Louvain and the surrounding suburbs, Blauwput, Kessel-Loo, Boven-Loo, Linden, Hérent, Thildonck, Bueken, Relst, Aerschot, Wesemael, Hersselt, Diest, Schaffen, Molenstede, Rillaer, Gelrode, and I have seen ruins and ashes surpassing everything I could have imagined, in spite of my very vivid apprehensions. Certain parts of my diocese, which I have not yet had time to see, Haekendover, Roosbeek, Boutersem, Budingen, Neer-Linter, Ottignies, Mousty, Wavre, Beyghem, Capelle-au-Bois, Humbeek, Nieuwenrode, Liezele, Londerzeel, Heyndonck, Mariekerke, Weert, Blaesveld, have undergone the same devastation. Churches, schools, asylums, hospitals, convents, to a considerable number are out of use or in ruins. Whole villages have almost disappeared. At Werchter-Wackerzeel, for example, out of 380 homes 130 remain; at Tremeloo, two-thirds of the commune have been destroyed; at Bueken, out of 100 houses 20 remain; at Schaffen, from a total of 200 habitations, 189 have disappeared, there remain 11. At Louvain one-third of the city is destroyed—1,074 buildings have disappeared; within the territory of the town and its suburban communes, Kessel-Loo, Hérent and Héverlé united there is a total of 1,823 houses burnt.

In this dear city of Louvain, memories of which haunt me persistently, the superb Collegiate Church of St. Peter will never recover its ancient splendour; the old college of St. Yves; the School of Fine Arts of the town; the commercial and consular school of the University, the ancient Halles, our rich Library, with its collections, its early printed books, its unpublished manuscripts, its archives, the gallery of its glories since the first days of its foundation, portraits of rectors, chancellors and illustrious professors, the sight of which inspired masters and pupils of to-day with the noble tradition of the past and stirred them to fresh efforts; all this accumulation of intellectual, historic, and artistic wealth, the fruit of five centuries of labour, is entirely annihilated.

Many parishes were deprived of their pastors. I still hear the sad accents of an old man of whom I asked whether he had heard mass on Sunday in his damaged church. "It is two months," said he, "since we have seen a priest." The parish priest and curate were in a concentration camp at Münster, not far from Hanover.

In this way thousands of Belgian citizens have been deported to the prisons of Germany, at Münster, at Celle, at Magdeburg. Münster alone accounts for 3,100 civilian prisoners. History will tell the physical and moral tortures of their long Calvary.

Hundreds of innocent people were shot; I do not possess this dread obituary to the full; but I know that at Aerschot in particular it comprised 91 persons, and that there their fellow citizens were compelled, under pain of death, to dig the graves for their burial. Within the circuit of Louvain and its adjacent communes, 176 persons, male and female, old men, and children at the breast, sick and hale, rich and poor alike, were shot or burnt.

In my diocese alone I know that thirteen priests or monks were put to death.* One of them, the parish priest of Gelrode, seems to have died the death of a martyr. I have made a pilgrimage to his tomb, and surrounded by the flock that he tended till yesterday with the zeal of an apostle, I begged of him to keep watch from heaven over his parish, the diocese and the country.

We can neither count our dead nor measure the extent of our ruins. What would these be if we turned our steps towards the districts of Liège, of Namur, of Andenne, of Dinant, of Tamines, of Charleroi; towards Virton, La Semois, all Luxemburg; towards Termonde, Dixmude, and our two Flanders?†

Even where lives are safe and the material edifices intact, what hidden suffering exists! Families, till yesterday in easy circumstances, are embarrassed; trade is stopped; the activity of business is suspended; industry is at a standstill, thousands and thousands of workmen are unemployed; work-women, shop-girls, humble servants, are deprived of their means of livelihood; and these poor souls turn feverishly on their bed of pain and ask you: When will it end?

* Their brothers in religion or in the priesthood will be anxious to know their names; here they are: Dupierreux, of the Society of Jesus; Brothers Sebastien and Allard, of the Josephite Congregation; Brother Candide, of the Congregation of the Brothers of Mercy; Father Maximin, Capuchin, and Father Vincent, Conventual; Lombaerts, parish priest of Boven-Loo; Goris, parish priest of Autgaerden; the Abbé Carette, Professor at the Episcopal College of Louvain; de Clerck, parish priest at Bueken; Dergent, parish priest at Gelrode; Wouters Jean, parish priest at Pont Brulé. Various circumstances lead us to think that the parish priest at Hérent, van Bladel, a venerable old man of 71 years, has also been killed; however, up to this time his body has not been found.

† I said that there had been 13 ecclesiastics shot in the diocese of Malines. There were, to my own knowledge, more than 30 shot in the dioceses of Namur, Tournai and Liège: Schlögel, parish priest of Hastière; Gille, parish priest of Couvin; Pieret, curate at Etalle; Alexandre, parish priest of Mussy-la-Ville; Maréchal, seminarist of Maissin; the Reverend Father Gillet, Benedictine of Maredsous; the Reverend Father Niculus, Premonstrant of the Abbey of Leffe; two Brothers of the same Abbey; a Brother of the Congregation of the Oblates; Poskin, parish priest of Surice; Hotlet, parish priest of Les Alloux; Georges, parish priest of Tintigny; Blondel, parish priest of Latour; Zenden, retired parish priest of Latour; the Abbé Jacques; Druet, parish priest of Acoz; Pollart, parish priest of Roselies; Labeye, parish priest of Blegny Trembleur; Thielen, parish priest of Haccourt; Janssen, parish priest of Heure-le-Romain; Chabot, parish priest of Forêt; Dossogne, parish priest of Hockai; Rensonnet, curate of Olne; Bilande, chaplain of deaf mutes at Rouge; the Abbé Docq, etc.

We can only answer : It is the secret of God. Yes, dear brethren, it is the secret of God. He is the Master of events and the Sovereign Ruler of Society. *Domini est terra et plenitudo ejus ; orbis terrarum et universi qui habitant in eo.* "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof ; the world, and they that dwell therein."* The first relation that arises between the creature and his Creator is one of entire dependence of the former on the latter. His life is dependent ; his nature, his faculties, his actions, his works are so. At every passing moment his dependence is renewed because without the support of the All-Powerful the existence of one second would vanish in the next. Adoration, which is the recognition of the Divine Sovereignty, should not be the result of a fleeting action, but should be the permanent state of the creature conscious of his origin. On every page of our Scriptures Jehovah affirms His sovereign rule. All the economy of the ancient Law, all the history of the elect people tends to the same point ; to maintain Jehovah on His throne, to cast down idols. "I am the first and the last," He says in Isaiah, "and there is no God beside me ; who is there like unto me, let him come forward and speak ! Is there any refuge without me ? I form the light and create darkness ; I make peace and create evil ; I, the Lord, do all these things. Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker ! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou ? or thy work, He hath no hands ! . . . Tell ye and bring them near ; yea, let them take counsel together, but know ye that there is no God else beside me ; a just God and a Saviour ; there is none beside me."† Oh ! proud Reason, you thought you could do without God ! You sneered when by Christ and His Church He pronounced the solemn words of atonement and penance. Drunk with your successes of a day, frivolous man, replete with gold and pleasure, you were in your insolence all sufficient to yourself ! And the true God was consigned to oblivion, ignored, blasphemed, noisily at times, by those who were bound by their position to set others an example of respect to order and its establishments. Anarchy penetrated the lower ranks ; good consciences were tempted to be dismayed. How far, thought they, how far, O Lord, wilt Thou suffer this orgy of iniquity ? Where art Thou, O Master, and wilt Thou after all then put the impious in the right who proclaim that Thou disregardest the work of Thine hands ?

A lightning stroke and lo ! all human calculations were upset. The whole of Europe trembled on a volcano.

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Emotions crowd into the soul, but there is one that dominates the rest, it is the feeling that God reveals himself as Master.

The nations who were the first to attack and those who defend themselves, alike feel themselves in the hands of One without whom nothing is done, nothing completed.

Men long unaccustomed to prayer turn to God. In the army, in civil life, in public, in the secrecy of their consciences, they pray. And the prayer is not on this occasion a word learnt by heart, which flows from the lips, it rises from the depths of the soul, and presents itself before the Sovereign Majesty under the divine form of an offering up of life. The whole being sacrifices itself to God. It is adoration, the accomplishment of the first and fundamental precept of moral and religious order : *Dominum Deum tuum adorabis et illi soli servies.*‡ "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

Even those who murmur and do not feel the courage to bow their heads under the hand that strikes and saves us, acknowledge implicitly that God is the Supreme Master, for they only blaspheme Him because He is not prompt enough in accommodating Himself to their wishes.

As for us, my brethren, we wish sincerely to adore Him. We do not yet see in all its clearness the revelation of His wisdom, but our faith places its trust in Him. We bow humbly to His justice and hope for His mercy. With the holy man Tobit we acknowledge that He punishes us because we have sinned, but we know that He will save us because He is merciful. *Ipsæ castigavit nos propter iniquitates nostras ; et ipse salvabit nos propter misericordiam suam.*§

It would be cruel to lay stress on our misdeeds at the very moment when we are paying so dearly for them with such greatness of soul. But shall we not allow that we have something to expiate ? "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." *Omni autem cui multum datum est, multum quæretur ab eo.*|| Yet did the moral and religious level of the country rise together with its economic prosperity ? The Sunday rest, the attendance at Mass on Sunday, the respect for marriage, the laws of modesty, what have you made of them ? What has become, even in Christian families, of the simplicity of our fathers, the spirit of penitence, the confidence in authority ? And we, monks, priests, bishops, we above all, whose sublime mission it is to translate into our daily life, even more than in our teaching, the Gospel of Christ, have we sufficiently given ourselves the right to repeat to our people the words of the Apostle of the Gentiles : "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." *Imitatores mei estote, sicut et ego Christi.*¶ We worked it may be, we prayed also it may be, but it was not enough. We are, by our official duty, the public expiators of the sins of the world. Yet what was it that dominated our life, middle-class well-being, or atonement ?

* Psalm xxiv, 1.

† Isaiah xlv., 8, 9, 21.

‡ Deuteronomy vi., 7. Matthew iv., 10.

§ Tobit xiii., 6.

|| Luke xii., 48.

¶ I. Corinthians xi., 1.

Oh ! yes, we all have fallen in our time under the reproach that the Eternal made to His elect people after the exodus from Egypt : " My people have waxed fat and kicked ; my children in whom there is no faith, they have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God ; and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people." *Incrassatus est dilectus et recalcitravit. . . . Infideles filii ; ipsi me provocaverunt in eo, qui non erat Deus, et ego provocabo eos in eo, qui non est populus.* " I will yet save them, for I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say : Our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this." *Sed propter iram inimicorum distuli, ne forte superbirent hostes eorum et dicerent : Manus nostra excelsa, et non Dominus fecit hæc omnia.* " See now that I, even I, am he and there is no god with me ; I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal." *Videte quod ego sim solus, et non sit alius Deus præter me. - Ego occidam et ego vivere faciam : percutiam et ego sanabo.**

God will save Belgium, my brethren, you can have no doubt at all.

Say rather, He is saving it.

In truth, across the gleams of fire and the mists of blood, do you not see already the evidences of His love ?

Which of us would have the courage to tear up the last page of our history ?

Who does not contemplate with pride the radiance of our martyred country's glory ?

Whilst in pain she begets heroism, our mother pours forth energy into the blood of her sons.

We had need, let us confess, of a lesson of patriotism.

The Belgians in great numbers wore out their strength and wasted their time in empty quarrels of classes, of races, of personal passions.

But when, on the 2nd August, a foreign Power, trusting in its might and forgetful of the faith of treaties, dared to threaten our independence, all Belgians, without distinction, either of party, or condition, or origin, rose up like one man, and pressed close about their King and Government to say to the invader : " Thou shall not pass."

All at once behold us, resolutely conscious of our patriotism ! For there is in each one of us a sentiment deeper than personal interest, ties of blood, and the pressure of parties ; it is the necessity and in consequence the will, to devote one's self to the general interest, to what Rome called, " the commonweal," *res publica*. This sentiment is *Patriotism*. . . .

The fatherland is not only a multitude of individuals or families inhabiting the same soil, exchanging among themselves the more or less narrow relations of neighbourliness and business, calling to mind the same recollections, whether happy or painful ; no, it is an association of souls in the service of a social organisation, which we must at all price, even at the price of blood, safeguard and defend under the direction of him or of those who preside over its destinies.

It is because they have the same soul that fellow countrymen live by their traditions the same life in the past ; by their common aspirations and their common hopes, a prolongation of the same life in the future.

Patriotism, the internal principle of unity and order, the organic union of the members of one country, was regarded by the best thinkers of ancient Greece and Rome as the highest of natural virtues. Aristotle, the prince of heathen philosophers, esteemed disinterested service to the city, that is to say, the State, as the chief of terrestrial ideals.

The religion of Christ made patriotism a law ; there is no perfect Christian who is not a perfect patriot. It raises the ideal above pagan motives and gives it precision by making us see that it only realises itself in the Absolute.

Whence comes, in fact, this universal, irresistible enthusiasm, which combines at once all the will of the nation into one effort of cohesion and resistance to the hostile forces which threaten its unity and independence ?

How do we explain that all at once all interests yield before the general interest ; that all lives offer themselves for sacrifice ?

It is not true that the State is essentially more valuable than the individual and the family, since the good of families and of individuals is the reason of its organisation.

It is not true that country is a god Moloch, upon whose altar all lives may be legitimately sacrificed.

The brutality of pagan manners and the despotism of Cæsars conduced to this aberration—and modern militarism has tended to revive it—that the State is omnipotent and that its discretionary power creates Right.

No, replies Christian theology ; Right is Peace ; that is to say, the internal order of the nation founded on Justice. Again, Justice itself is only absolute because it is the expression of the essential accord between men and God and amongst themselves.

Thus, war for the sake of war is a crime. War only justifies itself as a necessary means of insuring peace.

" Peace must not serve as a preparation for war," says St. Augustine. " War may be made only to secure peace." *Non enim pax queritur ut bellum excitetur, sed bellum geritur ut pax adquiratur.†*

By the light of this instruction, which St. Thomas Aquinas‡ repeats on his own account, patriotism assumes a religious character.

* Deuteronomy xxxii., 15, 21, 27, 39.

† St. Augustine. *Epistle to Boniface*, 189, 6.

‡ *Sum. Theolog.*, 2, 2, q. 40, art. 1.

The interests of family, of class, of party, the bodily life of the individual, are in the scale of values below the ideal of patriotism, because this ideal is the Right, which is absolute. Or, again, this ideal is the public recognition of Right applied to the nation, national Honour.

Now there is nothing really absolute except God.

God alone dominates, by His Holiness and the Sovereignty of His Empire, all interests and all wills.

To affirm the absolute necessity of subordinating all to Right, to Justice, to Order and to Truth, is therefore implicitly to affirm God.

And when our humble soldiers to whom we have made our acknowledgments for their heroism, answered us with simplicity: "We have only done our duty; honour required it;" they expressed in their own way the religious character of their patriotism.

Who does not feel that patriotism is "sacred," and that any attempt against national dignity is a sort of sacrilegious profanation?

An officer of the Headquarters Staff asked me recently if the soldier who falls in a just cause—and ours is evidently that—is a martyr.

In the strict theological acceptation of the word, no, the soldier is not a martyr, for he dies with arms in his hands, whilst the martyr gives himself up defenceless to the violence of his executioners.

But if you ask me what I think of the eternal salvation of a brave man, who gives his life willingly to defend the honour of his country, and to avenge violated justice, I do not hesitate to reply that without any doubt Christ crowns military valour, and that death accepted in the Christian spirit assures the soldier the salvation of his soul.

"Greater love," says our Saviour, "hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." *Majorem hac dilectionem nemo habet ut animam suam ponat quis pro amicis suis.**

The soldier who dies to save his brethren, to protect the homes and altars of his country, accomplishes this higher form of love.

He will not always, I admit, have submitted the moral value of his sacrifice to a minute analysis, but is it necessary to believe that God demands of the brave man, surrounded by the fire of battle, the methodic precision of a moralist or theologian?

We admire the heroism of the soldier; must not God accept it with love?

Christian mothers, be proud of your children. Of all our sorrows, yours is perhaps the most worthy of our respect. I seem to see you mourning but erect, beside the Virgin of Sorrows, at the foot of the Cross. Let us offer you our congratulations together with our sympathy. Every hero does not appear in the Army Orders of the day, but we are justified in hoping for them the immortal crown which encircles the brow of the elect.

For such is the virtue of an act of perfect charity, that by itself alone it effaces an entire life of sin. Of a sinner instantly it makes a saint.

It should be a Christian consolation for all to think that those, not only on our side, but in every belligerent army, who obey in good faith the commands of their officers, in service of a cause they believe just, can benefit by the moral virtue of their sacrifice. And must there not have been many among those young men of twenty years who would not perhaps have had the courage to live well, yet in patriotic enthusiasm felt the courage to die well?

Is it not true, my brethren, that God has the supreme art of blending mercy and wisdom with justice, and ought you not to recognize that, if war is in our earthly life a scourge, whose power of destruction and whose extent we shall measure with difficulty, yet it is also an agent of purification for the soul, a means of expiation, a lever which enables it to climb the heights of patriotism and Christian disinterestedness?

ENDURANCE.

We can say without boasting, my brethren, that our little Belgium has achieved the first rank in the esteem of nations.

There are, I know, in Italy, and in Holland especially, clever people who have said: Why expose Belgium to this immense loss of wealth and men? Would it not have been sufficient to make a verbal protest against hostile aggression, or to fire one shot, if need be, on the frontier?

But all men of heart will be with us against the advocates of such shabby calculation.

Utilitarianism is not either for individuals or societies the standard of Christian citizenship.

Article 7 of the Treaty signed in London on the 19th April, 1839, by King Leopold, in the name of Belgium on the one part; by the Emperor of Austria, the King of France, the Queen of England, the King of Prussia, the Emperor of Russia on the other part, declares that "Belgium shall form an independent and perpetually neutral State, and that she will be bound to observe this neutrality towards all States."

On their side the co-signatories of the Treaty "promise, on their own behalf and on behalf of their successors, under the faith of an oath, to accomplish and observe the said Treaty in all its points and articles without contravening it or allowing it to be contravened."

Belgium was engaged in honour to defend her independence; she has kept her word.

* John xv., 13.

The other Powers had engaged to respect and protect the neutrality of Belgium. Germany violated her oath. England is faithful to hers. Those are the facts.

The rights of the conscience are sovereign ; it would have been unworthy of us to entrench ourselves behind a pretence of resistance.

We do not regret our first impulse, we are proud of it. Writing at a tragic hour a solemn page of our history, we have wished it to be sincere and glorious. We shall prove our endurance to the end.

The humble people give us an example. The citizens of all classes of society have given their sons without grudging to their country ; but it is the poor who, above all, suffer privations, cold, and even hunger. Yet if I judge of their sentiments in general from what I have observed in the populous quarters of Malines and the most distressed communes of my diocese, the people have vigour in their sufferings. They await vengeance, they do not speak of abdication.

Trial is, in the hands of a Divine Omnipotence, a two-edged sword.

If you rebel against it, it will wound you to death. If you bow the head and accept it, it will sanctify you.

God tries us, says the Apostle St. James, but He never incites us to evil. All that comes from Him is good ; all that descends from Heaven towards us is, in the designs of God, a ray of light and a mark of love. It is we who, obeying the allurements of disordered passions, sometimes transform the benefits of Providence into a deadly poison. "Blessed" is the fearless conclusion of the aged Apostle, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation ; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."*

A truce then to murmurs, my brethren. Willingly shall I apply to you the words which the Apostle St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, addressed to all Christians, in recalling to them the example of the bloody sacrifice of Our Lord on His Cross. "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood," said He to them. *Non dum usque ad sanguinem restitistis.*† It is not only this universal and transcendent example of Calvary which I ask you to contemplate, it is that also of our thirty, perhaps forty, thousand soldiers who have shed their blood for their country. In comparison with these brave men, tell me, you who have been deprived for the time being of your usual comfort, your newspapers, your travelling facilities, and your family intercourse, what have you endured, what have you suffered ?

May the patriotism of our army, may the heroism of our King, of our beloved Queen, so touching in her greatness of soul, serve as a stimulant and a support to us. Let us not complain, let us not complain any more.

Let us deserve our liberation. Let us hasten it by our virtue even more than by the prayers on our lips.

Courage, my brethren, suffering will pass away ; the crown of life for our souls, the glory for our nation will not pass away.

I do not ask you, mark this, to renounce any of your patriotic hopes.

On the contrary, I consider it as an obligation of my pastoral charge to define for you your duties of conscience in face of a Power which has invaded our soil and which for the time being occupies the greater portion of it.

This Power has no legitimate authority. And, consequently, in the depths of your soul, you owe to it neither esteem, nor attachment, nor obedience. The only legitimate Power in Belgium is that which belongs to our King, to his Government, to the representatives of the nation. This alone is the authority for us. This alone has a right to the love of our hearts, to our submission.

In themselves, the acts of public administration of the occupying enemy would be without force, but the legitimate authority tacitly ratifies those justified by the general interest, and this ratification alone gives them any legal value.

Occupied provinces are not conquered provinces ; no more than Galicia is a Russian province is Belgium a German province.

Nevertheless, the occupied part of the country is in a material situation which she must loyally endure. The greater number of our towns have surrendered to the enemy. They are bound to respect the signed conditions of their surrender.

From the beginning of military operations the civil authorities of the country have persistently ordered private persons to abstain from acts of hostility towards the enemy army. These orders remain in force.

Our army alone, in company with the gallant battalions of our Allies, has the honour and the burden of national defence. Let us await from it the final deliverance.

Let us shew the respect, which the general interest demands, towards those who dominate our country by military force and who, in the depth of their consciences, cannot but admire the chivalrous energy with which we have defended and defend our independence. Many amongst them protest that they wish to-day, so far as they can, to lighten our trials, and to assist in the resumption among us of a minimum of regular public life. Let us observe the rules they impose on us so long as they imply no attack on the liberty of our Christian consciences, or on our patriotic dignity. Do not let us think that courage consists in bravado, or bravery in agitation.

You, in particular, my very dear brethren in the priesthood, be at once the best guardians of patriotism and the supporters of public order.

* James i., 12.

† Hebrews xii., 4.

Upon the field of battle you have been magnificent. The King and the army admire the bravery of our military chaplains in face of death, the charity of our hospital attendants and of our stretcher-bearers. Your Bishops are proud of you.

You have suffered much. You have endured grievous calumnies. Be patient. History will avenge you. This very day I bear my witness to it. Wherever it has been possible I have interrogated the people, the clergy, especially a number, already considerable, of priests, who had been deported to the prisons of Germany and whom a feeling of humanity, to which I am glad to render homage, has set at liberty. Yet I affirm on my honour, and I am ready to declare on the faith of an oath, that I have not up to this met a single ecclesiastic, secular or regular, who has stirred up the civil population to take up arms against the enemy. All, on the contrary, have faithfully obeyed the episcopal instructions which they received from the first days of August, and which bind them to use their moral influence among our people to keep them calm and to induce them to respect the military regulations.

Persevere then in this ministry of peace, which is for you the most salutary form of patriotism.

Accept with magnanimity the privations you have to undergo.

Simplify still more your lives if you can. One of you, reduced by pillage to a state bordering on destitution, said to me lately : "I live now as I should wish to have lived always."

Multiply the efforts of your charity, temporal and spiritual. Follow the example of the great Apostle : let yourselves be beset daily by the care of all the churches. Say with him : "Who is weak, and I am not weak ? Who is offended, and I burn not ?"*

Make yourselves the champions of the virtues which civic honour and the Gospel alike prescribe to you. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."† May the dignity of our lives authorise us to make our own, my well beloved brothers, this proud conclusion of St. Paul's : "Those things which ye have both learned and received and heard and seen in me, do ; and the God of Peace shall be with you."‡ *Quæ et didicistis et accepistis, et audistis, et vidistis in me, hæc agite ; et Deus pacis erit vobiscum.*

CONCLUSION.

Let us continue, then, my well beloved brethren, to pray, to do penance, to be present at the Holy Mass and to communicate for the holy cause of our dear country.

Sunday, the 3rd of January, in particular, will be a day of universal prayer for Belgium and for our Allies.

A general communion and a solemn Benediction will be held on this day for the success of our arms.

On the Saturday of each week I again request all parish priests to celebrate a funeral service for the repose of the souls of our soldiers.

Pecuniary resources are, I know, scarce amongst all. Nevertheless, if you have little, give of the little that you have to relieve the poverty of those of your compatriots who find themselves without shelter, without coal, without sufficient food. I have charged the parish priests to form in each parish a committee of relief for this purpose. Support them, and of your charity forward to me the alms which you can spare from your superfluity if not from your necessity, that I may distribute them according to the needs revealed to me.

Our misfortunes have moved other nations. England, Ireland, and Scotland, France, Holland, the United States and Canada compete in generosity to assuage our distress. This spectacle is at once sad and grand. Here again the wisdom of Providence, which draws good from evil, reveals itself. In your name and in my own, my brethren, I offer to the Governments and to the nations who occupy themselves so nobly with our misfortunes, the earnest testimony of our admiration and of our gratitude.

With touching benevolence our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XV., has been the first to incline his paternal heart to us.

When, some moments after his election, he deigned to take me to his arms, I had the assurance to beg of him that his first pontifical blessing should be for Belgium, then already so direly tested by the war. He responded with eagerness to my desire, which I knew was also yours.

To-day, with an exquisite delicacy, he takes the initiative of giving up to you your annual little offering to Peter's Pence. In a document, dated on the beautiful day of the festival of the Immaculate Virgin, he vouchsafes to tell us with what lively sympathy he participates in our troubles ; he prays for us, calls down on the Belgian nation protection from on high, and invites us to salute in the approaching birthday of the Prince of Peace the dawn of better days. Here is the text of this precious document :—

"To our dear Son *Desiré Mercier*, Cardinal Priest of the Holy Roman Church, by the title of *St. Peter-in-Chains*, Archbishop of Malines, at Malines.

"Our dear Son, salutation and apostolic benediction.

"The paternal solicitude that we feel for all the faithful whom Divine Providence has entrusted to our care, make us share their sorrows even more than their joys.

* II. Corinthians xi., 29.

† Philippians iv., 8.

‡ *Ibid.* iv., 9.

"Must we not then experience a very lively sorrow in thinking of the Belgian nation, which we love so well, reduced by a war, the most cruel and disastrous that can be imagined, to a situation truly lamentable ?

"In fact, we see the King of the Belgians and his august family, the members of the Government, the chief people of the nation, the Bishops, the priests, the whole population enduring ills which fill every generous heart with pity, and which our soul, all burning with paternal love, is the first to resent. Therefore, under the weight of this sorrow and mourning, let us appeal in all our prayer for the end of so many ills. May the God of Mercy hasten this moment. Meanwhile we strive, so far as in us lies, to allay as much as possible these bitter griefs. In this connection the steps taken by our dear son, Cardinal von Hartmann, Archbishop of Cologne, to induce the authorities to treat imprisoned French or Belgian priests detained in Germany as officers, were very pleasing to us, and we wished to testify publicly our gratitude to him for them.

"As to Belgium, it has been recently reported to us that the faithful of this sorely tried nation, have not omitted in their piety to turn their looks and their thoughts to us. Though themselves under the stress of so many calamities, they yet propose to collect, this year, as in former years, Peter's Pence, to provide for the necessities of the Apostolic Holy See. This truly incomparable evidence of piety and attachment fills us with admiration, we accept it with all the goodwill that it deserves from a grateful heart ; but, having regard to the painful position in which our dear children find themselves, we absolutely cannot persuade ourselves to encourage the realisation of this project, noble though it be. If some money has already been collected, our wish is that it be applied to the relief of the Belgian people, as illustrious for its nobility and piety as it is at this moment worthy of compassion.

"In the midst of the difficulties and agonies of the present hour, we invite those children who are so dear to us to remember that 'The arm of the Lord is not shortened, but that He can always save us ; and that His ear is not deaf, but that He can always hear our prayer.'

"And may this hope of divine succour increase at the approach of the Feast of Christmas, the mystery of which celebrates the birth of Our Lord and recalls to us that peace which God announced to men by his angels.

"May sad and afflicted souls also find comfort and consolation in the assurance of the paternal tenderness which inspires our prayer ; yes, may God have pity on the Belgian nation ; may He load it with the abundance of His benefits.

"In pledge of these desires we accord with a full heart to each and to all, and above all to you, our dear son, the apostolic benediction.

"Given at Rome, near St. Peter's, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, the year MCMXIV, the first year of our pontificate.

"BENEDICT XV., Pope."

One last word, my well beloved brethren. At the beginning of this crisis I said to you that on the day of the liberation of our territory we should do well to give a public testimony of our gratitude to the Sacred Heart and the Very Blessed Virgin. Since that date I have been able to consult my colleagues in the episcopate, and in accord with them, I beg you to make, as soon as we can do so, a new effort to hasten the building of the national basilica, which Belgium has promised to dedicate to the Sacred Heart. As soon as the sun of peace dawns on our country, we shall restore our ruins, we shall give back their shelter to those who have none, we shall rebuild our churches, we shall rebuild our libraries, and we have good hope of crowning this work of reconstruction by raising, on the heights of the capital of Belgium free and Catholic, the national basilica of the Sacred Heart. Then, each year, we shall make it our duty to celebrate with solemnity, the Friday after the Octave of Corpus Christi, the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

Also, in each district of the diocese, the clergy will organise annually a pilgrimage of thanksgiving to one of the privileged sanctuaries of the Blessed Virgin, so specially to honour the Protectress of our national independence and the universal Mediatrix of Christian society.

This letter is to be read several times, on the first day of the year and on the Sundays which shall follow the day on which it shall have reached you.

Accept, my well beloved brethren, the wishes that I form for you and for the welfare of your families, and receive, I pray you, my paternal benediction,

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER,
Archbishop of Malines.

VI.

SOLEMN PROTEST, DATED 10TH APRIL, 1915, OF MGR. HEYLEN, BISHOP OF NAMUR,
AGAINST THE MEMORANDUM OF THE PRUSSIAN MINISTRY OF WAR, DATED 22ND
JANUARY, 1915, REPUBLISHING THE LEGEND OF BELGIAN *FRANCS-TIREURS*.

On the 22nd January, 1915, the Prussian Minister of War transmitted to the Chancellor of the German Empire a Memorandum, in which the German military authorities, whilst admitting that the Belgian Clergy had on the whole conducted itself correctly toward the armies of invasion, persisted in accusing the Belgian civil population and certain members of the clergy of having participated in hostilities as *francs-tireurs*.

The complete text of this official document, the contents of which were communicated to the diplomatic representatives of the Empire, in order to be used by them (as was done by the German Ambassador at Madrid on the 7th of February, 1915), for purposes of propaganda, only came to the knowledge of the public by accident and late in the day.*

We append the solemn protest made by Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, against the above document, so far as concerns his diocese,† under date of the 10th of April, 1915.

The name of Mgr. Heylen is well known. The Bishop of Namur has been President for 15 years past of the International Committee of the Eucharistic Congress, and in this capacity has presided over the Congresses held in Paris, London, Rome, Madrid, Cologne and Vienna, amongst others.

REPLY FOR THE DIOCESE OF NAMUR (PROVINCES OF NAMUR AND LUXEMBURG)
TO THE MEMORANDUM OF 22ND JANUARY, 1915, TRANSMITTED BY THE PRUSSIAN
MINISTER OF WAR TO CHANCELLOR VON BETHMANN-HOLLWEG, AND PUBLISHED
IN FLEMISH IN THE "NIEUWE ROTTERDAMSCHÉ COURANT" OF THE 23RD
MARCH, 1915 (AVONDBLAD B), AND IN THE "RHEINISCH-WESTFÄLISCHE
ZEITUNG" OF THE 3RD OF APRIL, 1915, No. 264,‡ UNDER THE HEADING: EIN
GESTOHNENES SCHRIFTSTÜCK (A STOLEN DOCUMENT).

I. According to the Memorandum, the civil population of Belgium, with the consent of the authorities whose proclamations had led them into error, gave themselves up to underhand attacks and illegal popular war, and that to a very great extent. This fact was established by hundreds of witnesses heard on oath; it would not, besides, be contested seriously by any Belgian. Consequently the German atrocities were not monstrous, but a just repression of the war of *francs-tireurs*.

On more than one occasion, similar assertions have received a formal denial. We, finding ourselves to-day, as it seems, in presence of an official intervention of the German authorities, renew the denial with still more firmness and vigour. We affirm in unison *with all the inhabitants of our villages, without exception, with the whole Belgian people, that the story of Belgian francs-tireurs is a myth, an invention, and a calumny.*

It is evident that the German army crossed the Belgian frontier and effected the invasion with the preconceived idea that they would meet groups of this kind, a reminiscence of the war of 1870. But German imagination is not sufficient to create what does not exist.

There has never been a single corps of *francs-tireurs* in Belgium.

This is so certain that we do not hesitate *solemnly to defy the German authority to prove the existence of a single body of francs-tireurs formed either before or after the invasion of our territory.*

We do not know even of one "isolated case" of civilians having fired on the troops, though we should not have been surprised at an individual fault. In some of our villages the population has been exterminated because, say the officers, they killed a major, or because some young girl tried to kill an officer, &c. . . . *Never has the supposed culprit been discovered or mentioned by name.*

Let them not therefore count on distorting the truth by aid of these general and stereotyped affirmations, which were first of all retailed in our villages during the passage of troops, which then made the round of the German Press, and which even now are displayed in German literature of the baser sort, illustrated with pretended scenes of *francs-tireurs*.‡

They must quote the facts, give proofs; in what village, in what house, did a Belgian fire on the soldiers? What is the name of a Belgian civilian taken with arms in his hands? Who are the witnesses heard by hundreds under oath?

These facts established, let them organise then the inquiry which has been proposed many times, an inquiry conducted by Belgian and German delegates, presided over by a neutral.

A one-sided inquiry, such as the German authorities are holding at this moment, has no probatory value. Its conclusions are rejected beforehand. It does not fulfil the necessary conditions of impartiality; the depositions are vitiated either by intimidation or by want of freedom; it is not even certain that the depositions are faithfully recorded, the witnesses having to sign their declarations written in a language unfamiliar to them.

The Belgian people, relying on the absolute truth and justice of their cause, have no fear whatever of the result of a serious inquiry. Meanwhile, "they are and will not cease to proclaim themselves innocent."

* See the text of the document, pp. 312 and 313. Emanating from the Prussian Ministry of War, the Memorandum of the 22nd January, 1915, is written by Major Bauer, Dr. Wagner and Herr Petzoldt. The first two are also, as is known, the compilers of similar reports appearing in the "White Book," on the subject of events at Aerschot, Andenne, Dinant and Louvain, reports signed by them on behalf of the Military Bureau of Inquiry into the violations of the laws of war, instituted at the Prussian Ministry of War.

† The detailed refutation prepared by Mgr. Heylen of the allegations contained in the "White Book," is to be found on pp. 322 *et seq.*

‡ See *Lüttich, Krieg und Sieg*, 1914 (Berlin, Leipzig; Hermann Hillger, Verlag). Major Viktor von Strantz, *Die Eroberung Belgiens*, 1914 (Wilhelm Köhler, Minden in Westfalen).

As regards the proclamations of the Government, in which the least instructed part of the population are supposed to have seen a call to a general popular war, it is sufficient, in order to judge how ill-founded are the allegations of the Memorandum, to read again the words of these clear and honest proclamations, which were reproduced and placarded by the communal administrations. It is puerile, and shows a truly singular opinion of the Belgian people to believe that they could have read in these instructions *just the opposite of what they say*. From another point of view the suggestion argues a total ignorance of the population of our two provinces, which is never bellicose, but remarkably gentle in character, and before the war, never displayed any sentiment hostile to Germany.

II. According to the Memorandum every statement concerning the tortures, the outrages and the vile treatment inflicted by the Germans is a lie.

By deciding thus "to deny everything," the author of the Memorandum puts himself in the most difficult position. Historic truth has its rights. Far from us be it to wish to exaggerate anything. We do not pretend that all the troops who passed through our two provinces committed crimes; the people have given many times to the officers and troops the praises merited by their moderation and correctness; but, on the other hand, it is certain, and altogether notorious, that the German troops committed divers crimes, denied by the Memorandum, in Namur and Luxemburg.

It is no less certain that the troops committed them, not in one or two isolated cases, but in an almost general manner and systematically. For how can we consider as "individual" acts, deeds repeated almost everywhere on the same days over a front of 30 leagues?

Legitimate defence, repression of *francs-tireurs*, says the German Minister.

This allegation has been answered under Section I. However, let us accept for a moment this hypothesis of a legitimate repression of *francs-tireurs* (which is not admitted, but supposed); we claim that the examination of each particular case of the destruction of a village and of the extermination of civilians, will have the result of shewing that the punishment was so out of all proportion to the alleged fault that no reason can ever make it legitimate. This is true of the scenes of Andenne, of Taminés, of Dinant, of Lefie, of Neffe, of Spontin, of Surice, of Tintigny, of Houdemont and of many other places, scenes so atrocious that they will one day rouse the universal conscience, and will be denounced by German justice itself, when it has a true knowledge of them and has recovered its self-command.

Moreover, still on this hypothesis of a repression of *francs-tireurs* in certain places, what civilised man will dare to justify the following acts done by soldiers: blows and wounds, atrocities of every kind, barbarous and bloody proceedings, cruel or insulting treatment, sometimes in respect of simple hostages or prisoners; killing the wounded, hunting peaceable and unarmed civilians; pillage by armed force and in proportions scarcely credible; the use of priests, young boys, old men, women and children as a rampart against the bullets and projectiles of the enemy; imputing to the civil population and making sanguinary reprisals for acts of war legitimately performed by Belgian or French soldiers; summary shootings without any sort of inquiry or regular sentence; extermination of entire families, of entire villages; wilful fires in nearly 200 villages of the two provinces, independent of destruction caused by battle; prolonged moral tortures inflicted on feeble beings, and sometimes on whole populations; rapes, murders of women, of young girls, of infants, &c.

Yet, these crimes are so numerous that they have occurred in one form or another, often in every form at once, in hundreds of our villages. Our populations which have survived these scenes of atrocity and have suffered from them more than one could ever say, have retained from them the impression of terror and horror produced by barbarity. It is, say they, a monstrous war made not on soldiers, but on unarmed civilians. They have with one accord forgotten the facts, horrible in themselves, of the war properly so-called, to recall only the sufferings experienced, in the course of less than a week, by a whole population, unarmed, terrified, delivered over to the mercy of savage soldiers. They say (can it be true?) that the number of civilians killed is not far short of the number of soldiers fallen in battle. What is surprising is that there are not still more victims. And one can only wonder at the ingenuity with which the inhabitants of such places as Dinant, Taminés, Spontin, Houdemont, and of the very numerous villages between the Sambre and the Meuse, have escaped the measure of extermination decreed against them.

Thousands on thousands of eye-witnesses are ready to affirm all these facts on the faith of an oath, when a regular commission of inquiry shall be established.

III. So far as concerns more especially the attitude of the German army towards parish priests and monks:

1. The German Minister considers every assertion concerning tortures, outrages or bad treatment inflicted on them as a lie, and declares that never has a German officer or soldier maliciously raised his hand against the persons or goods of an ecclesiastic.

The German Government has here been led into error in an inconceivable fashion. For this is the truth:

About 250 priests of the provinces of Namur and Luxemburg have been shot or wounded or pursued by gunfire or put against a wall to be shot, or seriously, and for a long time, menaced with death, or afflicted by infamous and cruel treatment, or deported to Germany, all in spite of their complete innocence.

Further, a considerable number of priests have had their presbyteries burnt ; others have been robbed of their money or plundered altogether, even to being deprived of their clothes, linen, bedding, furniture, sometimes even of the small quantity of wine kept for Mass.

We pass over here in silence the wilful and regrettable destruction of churches and the sacrileges, to the number of nearly 50, that have been committed.

2. The German Minister says that he is persuaded that the Belgian clergy, constituting themselves the guides of the people, have made efforts to restore calm and to restrain attacks.

He puts on record this affirmation, which marks an important and singular recantation.

The German armies were then deceived when they accused our priests individually, almost without exception, of having fired, of being *francs-tireurs*, captains of *francs-tireurs*, of having stirred up the population, organised the resistance of civilians, &c. ; they were deceived, when, as a result of these accusations, they inflicted very severe, often cruel, treatment on a very great number, and when they killed 26, some with refinements of cruelty.

3. For the purpose of proving that the efforts of the clergy mentioned in the Memorandum were not always crowned with success, they cite the case of the parish priest of Hollange, in the diocese of Namur, who, on the 15th of August, 1914, is said to have expressed his regret to Major-General Kühne that he had not succeeded in preventing some criminal elements in his parish from shooting at the Germans from the tops of trees.

They could not quote a more unfortunate case.

Let them appeal to the personal recollection of Major-General Kühne ; he will acknowledge himself that on the 15th of August he was not at Hollange. There was not at that date a single German soldier at Hollange.

The Major-General stopped at Hollange at a later date, and he had then a short conversation with the parish priest of Hollange ; but no word was exchanged between them that in the least degree resembles the report mentioned above. The parish priest on this point gives the most formal denial. He expresses the wish to be confronted with Major-General Kühne on the subject of these statements.

The matter reported is all the more strange and odious because the German troops and their officers were very well received at Hollange, and the population, without exception, behaved in an irreproachable manner, so much as to cause not the least anxiety either to the parish priest or to the German troops. Not only was not a single shot fired against the German troops, but no one dreamt that such a thing was possible. There was not a single gun in the village ; all had been collected beforehand and lodged at the communal hall, in accordance with the instructions of the Belgian Government.

Beside, anyone who knows the very mild and peaceable inhabitants of Hollange, can affirm that none of them, even if they had had arms, would have dreamt of using them.

There is another evident proof that no act of hostility was committed at Hollange ; it is that this village is one of those in which not a single house was burnt and not a single civilian shot.

The statement about Hollange is, then, false in general and in detail ; one can judge by this how well the conclusions are founded.

4. Here and there, continues the Memorandum, some Belgian ecclesiastics have ranged themselves on the side of the *francs-tireurs*, have taken up arms, or acted as spies.

We wait until they quote on this subject particular facts and bring proofs of culpability ; but we defy the German authority to establish the crime, either of the 26 priests put to death in the diocese, or of the hundreds upon hundreds of others accused of shooting, or otherwise molested ; and we undertake to prove the innocence of each individual one.

5. Out of a number of priests who are said to have given information, the Memorandum mentions an ecclesiastic of the diocese ; the priest of Spontin.

The German authorities could not make a worse choice ; do they not know that he gave no information, because he was executed without inquiry and without trial after having undergone inhuman treatment ? We affirm his entire innocence, and we have a well-founded conviction that if he had been court-martialled he would have been declared as innocent as his neighbour and brother priest, the parish priest of Dorinne, who was accused, tried, and declared not guilty.

6. As regards the diocese of Namur, there is not a single case of soldiers or civilians having made improper use of religious costume as disguise for the execution of surreptitious attacks. It is absolutely certain that no citizen amongst the thousands who were shot wore the ecclesiastical dress, and that the 26 priests shot in the diocese of Namur were not pretended priests or monks, nor disguised civilians, but really and truly priests. It is more correct to say that very numerous ecclesiastics, whose lives were threatened by the cruelty of German troops, owed their safety to disguise and to the wearing of civilian clothes.

So far as concerns the soldiers, if it is a question of those who have abused the religious dress, it is only German soldiers who have carried off ecclesiastical vestments from many a presbytery, and even from monasteries. The population of Dinant can bear witness that the German soldiers have been repeatedly seen serving at the table of officers and driving in motor cars clothed in the white habits of the regular canons of the order of St. Norbert, which they had stolen from the Abbey of Leffe.

7. A competent authority will reply as to the case of Dr. Coenraets, Vice-Rector of the University of Louvain. According to what has been stated by a person of position who has read the report of the Commission of Inquiry, the German Government appears to have made a strange mistake in connection with the allegations in this report.

The above considerations establish the feebleness of the allegations contained in the German Memorandum. There is not a Belgian who will not consider them false, outrageous, and calumnious, and who will not make an energetic and persevering protest against them.

The Belgian people have suffered much from an unjust invasion, which has oppressed and tortured them. They are conscious of having absolutely abstained from every crime in the legitimate resistance which they have offered to the invader. They are no less determined to observe during the occupation a correct and irreproachable attitude. What they will not allow is that their good name should be soiled by calumny.

They address an urgent and imploring appeal to the impartiality and justice of honest consciences and of neutral nations.

Namur, 10th April, 1915.

VII.

EXTRACT, RELATING TO THE ATTITUDE OF THE BELGIAN CLERGY, FROM THE REPORT OF THE INQUIRY MADE ON BEHALF OF THE "WIENER PRIESTERVEREIN," BY THE R. M. ALOIJSIUS VAN DEN BERGH, ACCREDITED BY H. E. THE CARDINAL PIFFL, PRINCE-ARCHBISHOP OF VIENNA.

An Austrian priest of Dutch origin, the R. M. Alojsius van den Bergh, accredited by His Eminence Cardinal Piffel, Prince-Archbishop of Vienna, has been charged to make an inquiry in Belgium, on behalf of the *Wiener Priesterverein* (Viennese Association of Priests) on the subject of the truth of the accusations brought against the Belgian clergy by the German military authorities.

This is the translation of an extract of his report, which was published on the 19th of August, 1915, in the *XXe Siecle*, a Belgian journal appearing at Havre; the Abbé van den Bergh has himself given the extract the form of an article.

A DOCUMENT OF THE GERMAN MINISTRY OF WAR.

A good friend has put me on a good track. I have made a voyage of discovery and am satisfied with the result. I have in my hands a document of the German Ministry of War* on the conduct of Belgian priests in the course of the present war, and I have been able to submit the truth of this document to a critical examination.

I read in the document in question :—

"All the assertions advanced up to now from Belgian sources on the subject of pretended atrocities of the German troops bear the manifest mark of calumny, for they constantly pass over in silence the simple fact, established by the depositions of hundreds of witnesses, heard on oath, which have not been seriously questioned by any Belgian, that at the beginning of the war the civil population, with the approval of the authorities, allowed themselves to be led astray into very extensive treacherous attacks upon the German troops.

"The 7th report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry is now, however, itself obliged to recognise that at the beginning of the war the Government had posted up everywhere proclamations relative to the people's war in which the least educated part of the population might have seen an invitation to a general popular war.

"Misled in this manner, the people thought they had the right to attack suddenly in the villages, chiefly at night and under the shelter of houses, of trees, and other hiding places, with arms hidden under their clothing or in the houses, the troops, who suspected nothing, and who had a little while before been received by this same population in a manner apparently friendly.

"It is only against this illegal popular war that the German defence was directed. This simple correlation of facts is constantly distorted on the Belgian side, and they represent as the cruelty of the German army what was only a repression, provoked by the Belgian Government itself, of the *francs-tireurs* war.

"Every allegation concerning martyrdom, mutilation, or infamous treatment inflicted by the Germans is an absolute lie. This applies in particular to the attitude of the German soldiers towards the members of the clergy, parish priests and monks. The German Government is convinced that it is precisely the leading Belgian clergy who have tried to restore the people to reason, and to persuade them to abandon these attacks. It is for this reason that the German officers have on various occasions tried to get, and succeeded in getting into communication with the clergy, so as to induce them to warn the people, as was done, amongst other places, at

* See p. 309 (note 1) and the notes of the Belgian Documentary Bureau, established at 52, Rue des Gobelins, Havre, Nos. 28, 29, 30, 75, 75 (2), 101, 129 and 135. Note No. 101 contains a translation of the whole text of the Memorandum of the Prussian Ministry of War. This document bears date 22nd January, 1915.

Louvain. This intervention of the clergy has not always been crowned with success ; thus it was that on the 15th of August, 1914, the parish priest of Hollange expressed his regret to Major-General Kühne that he had not been able to prevent some criminal elements of his commune from firing at the Germans from the tops of trees.

"The attitude of the Belgian Government also explains how—a thing which the German Government profoundly deplores—here and there some ecclesiastics have misunderstood the duties of their position, and have put themselves on the side of *francs-tireurs*, to the extent of taking up arms themselves and acting as spies. There is no doubt that these are exceptional cases, but where they occurred it was naturally impossible for the German military authorities to make any distinction between ecclesiastics and laymen who bore arms in the *francs-tireurs* war.

"To their regret they were bound, in isolated cases, to make these ecclesiastics responsible for their actions, as happened at Hockai, Spontin, Battice, Aerschot, and in some other localities.

"One must also remark that in some cases civilians and soldiers abused the religious habit by making use of it in the execution of their treacherous attacks.

"Never has a German officer or soldier of set purpose raised his hands against the property of ecclesiastics or even against any member of the clergy. The inquiry ordered by the German Government on the subject of the list published on the Belgian side of priests and monks alleged to have been assassinated will not be completed for a long time to come. What one may believe, for instance, of the Belgian allegations of the persecutions and assassinations of priests is illustrated by the case of the Vice-Rector of the University of Louvain, Dr. Coenraets. The Belgian Commission of Inquiry gave the fullest details of his terrible end ; he had been cruelly put to death at Louvain, in the presence of hundreds of spectators (amongst them women and children), who were obliged to applaud. That is what one reads in the reports of the Commission, which are hawked about everywhere. The truth is that Dr. Coenraets is actually living still in good health at the house of Professor Toels at Heerlen (Holland).

"This instance gives one a fair idea of the veracity of these new lists. The truth—and every man of good sense, particularly every reasonable ecclesiastic, will admit it—is that the German troops were not able, when they fell into ambushes, to make a distinction among the *francs-tireurs*, and were obliged to punish those who themselves compromised the dignity of their religious functions.

Substitute,

V. WANDEL.

To the Chancellor of the Empire.

This is the result of the German inquiry. The German army, in the person of its officers and men, is not found guilty of a single offence against ecclesiastical goods or persons. No insulting treatment even has taken place. A part of the Belgian clergy committed acts contrary to the laws of nations, and Germany has punished the guilty. The reason of the sometimes severe attitude of Germany must be sought in the war of *francs-tireurs*, which had been stirred up, at least in an indirect manner, by the Belgian Government. Everywhere Germany has behaved in a correct and just manner !

I do not know, reader, how you are, how you feel, how you think after reading this—what shall I call it?—astounding declaration. I confess that the effect it had on me was bewildering.

Does Germany, in short . . . ?

I could not rest until I had set out to submit the truth of this official German explanation to a severe critical examination by my own methods. That has cost me much trouble and much labour. But I have achieved my object.

And my conclusion ?

The official German explanation does *not** correspond to facts.

Germany, whose exact and scientific work I have learnt to appreciate in a very high degree, this same Germany has conducted an inquiry, so biased, so partial and so unworthy that it defies all description.

The valiant Cardinal Mercier, whose proposal for an inquiry conforming to the laws of historic criticism (see App. I) was refused by Germany, said to me, speaking of the methods of the German inquiry : "But it is an infamy" (in French in the text).

It is obviously impossible in an article in a newspaper to deal with this question thoroughly. What follows will however, perhaps, suffice.

To maintain that the Belgian Government instigated, directly or indirectly, a war of the people, and that it further admitted this fact, is such an evident contradiction of the truth that I have never yet read the like in the course of my life. The Belgian Government has energetically protested against the allegations of the German Ministry of War ; it admits solely and merely the possibility that here and there a civilian may have fired, *contrary to warning and prohibition** (see App. II.). And in face of that stands the odious procedure of the Germans. In the matter of the *francs-tireurs* Germany has put everything upside down.

The second accusation against the Belgian Government is, if possible, still more incomprehensible.

* Underlined in the text.

The German Ministry of War writes :—

“What one may believe, for instance, of the Belgian allegations of the persecutions and assassinations of priests is illustrated by the case of the Vice-Rector of the University of Louvain, Dr. Coenraets. The Belgian Commission of Inquiry gave the fullest details of his terrible end ; he had been cruelly put to death at Louvain in the presence of hundreds of spectators (amongst them women and children), who were obliged to applaud. That is what one reads in the reports of the Commission, which are hawked about everywhere. The truth is that Dr. Coenraets is actually living still in good health at the house of Dr. Toels at Heerlen (Holland). This instance gives one a fair idea of the veracity of these new lists.”

And what does the Belgian Commission actually say ?

“A *sham** execution of Mgr. Coenraets, Vice-Rector of the University and of Father Schmit, of the Order of Preachers, took place before them, a volley sounded, and the witnesses, *convinced of the reality** of the drama, were forced to applaud.”

I might write a bitter word here, but I refrain. It is too sad.

And this innocent phrase “that Mgr. Coenraets is actually still living in good health in Holland” is to me equally shocking. The poor man has suffered so much that he said to the Rector of the University, Ladeuze, who himself repeated it to me : “I shall never be able to undertake my duties again.”

The assertion of the Ministry of War that the parish priest of Hollange made a complaint about his congregation, is in all points an invention. The parish priest has protested against this allegation and desires to be confronted with Major-General Kühne.

The best proof, says Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, that the population of Hollange is a peaceful population, lies in the fact that in this village not a house was burnt, not a gun fired. That would have been impossible if the population had been really such as the pretended complaint of the parish priest asserts.

After having made these general remarks, I wish briefly and clearly to sum up the actual facts of the question of the Belgian clergy. I have been constantly among the German, Flemish and Walloon people, and the lower and higher clergy ; I have been able to study numerous *dossiers* most thoroughly ; I have worked in a severe and impartial manner, with the firm conviction of the importance of the question, and at what conclusion have I arrived ?

1. That the German army has killed about 50 clergy, that it has treated some hundreds of clergy disgracefully, that it has treated some of them in a truly bestial fashion, morally and physically.

There is no use in giving long stories of horrors here ! I am not writing for sensational purposes.

2. That an act against the law of nations has not been proved against a single cleric.

Up to now the German Ministry of War has already itself retracted in a loyal manner many accusations made against the Belgian clergy. For a long time past serious German circles have known what to think about the pretended putting out of eyes and cutting off of ears.

In 16 cases only (Pont-Brûlé, Spontin, Champion, Battice, Hockai, Hougaerde, Aerschot, &c.), the German Ministry of War remains convinced of culpability.

*I have conscientiously examined these cases and in honest criticism I must write “not proven” after each case.** I give some examples.

The German Ministry of War writes on the subject of Pont-Brûlé (Oyenbrug) :—

“On the 25th of August, 1914, the parish priest of Oyenbrug made an aggravated assault on a German sentinel, a soldier of the 3rd battalion of the 26th Regiment of Infantry of Reserve. He endeavoured to wrench the gun from the hands of the soldier, but was shot by another soldier, who came to the assistance of the man assaulted. These facts are established in a service report.”

What happened here really ?

Not exactly what is above stated.

In the afternoon of the 25th of August the parish priest of Oyenbrug was returning to his parish from the Abbey of the Premonstrants at Grimberghen.

On his way he was stopped without any kind of reason and taken to a room, where he passed the night. Early the following day 28 civilians were put into the same room. They found the parish priest standing with hands raised. He was obliged to remain in this attitude for hours. And when the poor man could no longer do so from weakness, he was cruelly beaten with bayonets and butts of rifles.

The soldiers compelled two civilians to beat him and to spit in his face. The soldiers showed them first how they ought to do it. They tore up his breviary and threw the pieces in his face. After having been again maltreated by the monsters with kicks and bludgeonings he collapsed.

They then poured a bucket of water on this inert mass, and, still perceiving a feeble movement, they cried out, “See, he is still alive !” and again they drenched him, but life seemed extinct.

After a long time a shiver ran through him ; the mass moved and stretched out its hand towards the gun of a soldier who was beside him. At the same moment he was killed by the bullet of another soldier.

That is the exact truth. The comparison of the two accounts is eloquent. I add nothing to it.

Further on, the Minister of War writes on the subject of Spontin :—

“On the evening of the 22nd of August the Burgomaster and the priest of Spontin were taken as hostages. Both of them gave assurances—and they guaranteed it—that no one in the village had arms, and that no one would fire on the Germans. As the night passed quietly the two hostages were released on the 23rd of August, in the morning between 5 and 6 o’clock.

“Immediately after their release shots were fired from all the windows and attics. An officer with men hurried to the presbytery. He found the doors of the cellar nailed up, and when he had forced

* Underlined in the text.

them, he found the priest in the cellar. On the writing-table in the living room of the presbytery there were sporting cartridges and cartridge cases, which had been used recently. During the search there was continuous firing from the steeple.

"The parish priest was shot by the order of Major Funke as a convicted *franc-tireur*.
(Declaration on oath of eye-witnesses, 2581/14 Z.V.).

So says the German Ministry of War. But is this true? No. That the Burgomaster and parish priest were taken as hostages is exact; the hour of their liberation is not. That is, however, of little importance.

After careful inquiry I am convinced that no inhabitant fired upon the Germans, and that there was absolutely no shooting from the steeple. Besides, the military authorities themselves did not venture to bring this accusation against the inhabitants at the inquiry of the 23rd and 24th of August.

The parish priest had not a grain of powder in his house. He was executed purely and simply without inquiry and without sentence, after having been treated in a truly barbarous manner, hung up alternately by the hands and feet; after his death they broke his jaw with blows of the butts of their rifles. It is unpardonable that Germany ventures still to maintain this accusation against this poor man.

Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, said to me: "I hold myself as guarantor of his complete innocence, and I am persuaded that if the military authorities had opened a judicial inquiry on the case, it would certainly have acquitted him."

The Ministry of War writes further on touching Champion:—

"On the 24th August, 1914, towards 10 o'clock at night, a lively fire was directed at the village of Champion, near Namur, against the principal entrance and the windows of the convent which is situated there, and which had been turned into a field hospital and was full of wounded. The marksmen were civilians, who fired from houses opposite the convent. The nuns of the convent had disappeared; they had hidden themselves in the cellars. The next day the houses on the spot were visited; in one house, inhabited by a priest and situated opposite the principal entrance of the convent, there were found about forty boxes of dynamite and about thirty boxes of cartridges." (Declaration on oath of a Sergeant of Landwehr II., eye-witness, 929/14 Z.V.).

I do not understand the German Ministry of War. What I deplore is that the Ministry of War should be able to take this fable seriously solely on the word of a sergeant.

When I made Mgr. the Bishop of Namur—who assuredly is not an anti-German person—read this, he shook his head sorrowfully and said: "Of all the accusations made, none perhaps is more false, none more odious." (In French in the text). Is this, then, the recompence for the devotion of priests and nuns who since the beginning of the war have given hospitality to about 250 German soldiers?

A later inquiry—which, be it noted, was not accomplished without pillage—was obliged to establish the innocence both of civilians and nuns. And the Ministry of War still talks about culpability! I repeat, I do not understand the mentality of the Ministry of War. It would be a waste of ink to enlarge upon the forty boxes of dynamite and thirty boxes of cartridges found in the house of a priest. Certain courtesies must be observed.

I confess I have neither the wish nor the time to dwell further on the details of other cases. I have said enough.

To discuss these questions with Germany just now would be in vain. Therefore I will not allow myself to be drawn into such a discussion, though I possess innumerable documents.

The psychology of the war explains many things. The German people does not know the truth. The day will come when Germany will learn the truth, and then, I think I may affirm it, Germany will be able to shew sufficient moral force to bow before acknowledged truth.

The supremely regrettable descriptions, made by different papers, of the infamies committed by Belgian priests with regard to German soldiers, the hypnotizing effect of melodramatic romances, above all of military romances, which unscrupulously exploit the taste of the public for the sensational and the horrible at the expense of Catholic priests, regular and secular, have all resulted in reawakening against the Catholic clergy the ancient antipathy which slumbered in the sub-conscious memory. It will need time to neutralize this action.

The campaign in certain circles against the Catholic clergy is cruelly avenged—not to the honour of the German name.

* * *

I. Compare the letter of Cardinal Mercier to Colonel Wengersky, Kreischef of Malines, dated 24th January, in which the Cardinal proposes to institute a Commission of Inquiry, composed of an equal number of German and Belgian members, under a neutral president.* Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, made the same proposal,† also the Belgian Government itself.‡

II. Compare reports on the violation of the law of nations in Belgium, 12th Report. This will suffice.

If we wish to be fair we are bound to agree that the Belgian Government is without reproach in this respect.

As early as the 4th of August, the Minister of the Interior, M. Berryer, addressed to 2,700 communes of Belgium a circular on the attitude which the population was to observe towards the enemy:—

"The menace of a hostile invasion will cause disturbance and disorder among the people. The first care of the communal authorities will be to instruct those under them in the duties of all towards their country, and in the way in which they will have to behave when faced by the invading army.

"According to the laws of war, acts of hostility, that is to say resistance and attack by arms, the use of arms against single enemy soldiers or direct intervention in any battle or engagements, are never permitted to those who are not either as members of the Army or Civic Guard or of a Volunteer Corps, organised under martial law, under the command of a superior officer and do not wear a distinctive badge or uniform."

In the Belgian papers of all opinions the following appeared daily:

* The text of this letter is given on page 356 of the present volume.

† See pages 309 and 357 of the present volume.

‡ See p. 157 of the first volume of the report of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.

TO CIVILIANS.

The Minister of the Interior enjoins civilians, if the enemy appears in their neighbourhood:—
Not to fight.

To give expression to no insulting or threatening words.

To remain within their houses and close the windows so that it will be impossible to allege that there was any provocation.

To evacuate any houses or isolated hamlet, which the soldiers may occupy in order to defend themselves, so that it cannot be alleged that civilians have fired, &c.

VIII.

DOCUMENTS FORWARDED BY THE FRENCH MILITARY AUTHORITIES ON THE SUBJECT
OF THE PRETENDED VIOLATION OF BELGIAN TERRITORY BY FRENCH TROOPS ON
THE 31st JULY, 1914.*

GREAT HEAD QUARTERS
of the
ARMIES OF THE EAST,
Staff Office,
3rd Bureau.

No. 13799.

A German work† has published declarations attributed to three French cavalry prisoners, according to which certain regiments of French cavalry crossed the Belgian frontier on the 31st of July.

It is necessary to note that these distorted declarations are in absolute disagreement with the orders given at the beginning of the campaign by the French High Command in execution of the instructions of the Government.

In fact, the Minister of War wrote on the 4th of August :—

"Germany will attempt by means of false news to induce us to violate Belgian neutrality. It is strictly forbidden in the most formal manner until an order is given to the contrary for any of our troops to enter Belgian territory even as patrols or single cavalymen, also, for any aviator to fly over that territory. A contrary order will not be given until the Great Headquarters have come to an understanding with the Belgian Government.

" (Signed) MESSIMY."

Only on the 5th of August, after having come to an arrangement with the Belgian Government, did the General Commanding-in-Chief authorise reconnoitring parties of cavalry to enter Belgian territory, giving orders for them to act there as in a friendly and allied country.

Again on the same day at 7 o'clock in the evening the order was given by the General Commanding-in-Chief to the corps of cavalry (Charleville district), and to the 22nd division of cavalry (Mangiennes district) to cross the frontier on the next day, the 6th of August, and to proceed towards Neufchâteau.

Under these conditions it would seem difficult to believe that regiments of cavalry could have been seen in Belgian territory on the 31st of July.

The examination of the declarations in question makes evident also inexactitude of dates, confusion of names and errors of facts which rob them of any value. It is necessary to examine them in detail in order to refute them categorically.

I.

Trooper Julian Requet, of the 8th Regiment of Hussars,‡ is said to have stated that his regiment arrived at La Neuville-aux-Tourneurs in the night of the 31st of July—1st of August, remained there two days, then proceeded to Donchery and thence to Bouillon; that it crossed the Belgian frontier "on the 2nd of August about 5 o'clock in the afternoon." At Bouillon the 8th Hussars joined the 3rd Regiment of Hussars, also the 23rd and 27th Dragoons, who crossed the frontier "about the same time."

The division to which the 8th Hussars belonged was part of the cavalry corps. This division duly arrived at its concentration camp on the morning of the 1st of August (Aubenton-Rumigny district), but it remained there the 2nd, 3rd and 4th of August.

* The ultimatum addressed by Germany to the Belgian Government is dated 2nd August; the violation of Belgian territory by German troops and the appeal of Belgium to the Allied Powers took place on the 4th August.

† The work in question is entitled *La Belgique Coupable*, French translation of the book *Belgiens Schuld*, by Richard Grasshoff (Berlin, Georg Reimer).

‡ Text of the deposition of Julian Requet (page 13 of *La Belgique Coupable*):—

"I was on patrol duty with two other hussars. Both these two perished without doubt, whilst I got off with the loss of my horse. I then ran to the nearest village and I changed my clothes in a house. Having been made prisoner by myself I can give no information as to the whereabouts of my other companions.

"Interrogated upon other facts, the witness declared that the mobilisation of his regiment took place on the 30th of July. The regiment quitted its garrison on the 31st of July and arrived at Hoison at midnight. Then the same night the regiment marched to La Neuville-aux-Tourneurs, where it remained two days. From there it was sent to Donchery, and on the 2nd of August to Bouillon, after having consequently crossed the Belgian frontier on the 2nd of August about 5 o'clock in the evening. At Bouillon the regiment found the 23rd and 27th Dragoons, also the 3rd Hussars, who had also crossed the frontier at the same time.

In particular, the light brigade of which the 8th Hussars formed part, was encamped for those three days in the district Gironde—Foulzy—Auvillers—La Neuville-aux-Tourneurs (south-east of Rocroy).

It is true that, as Trooper Requet says, this brigade afterwards left for Donchery; this march took place on the 5th of August; on the 5th of August in the evening it encamped in the zone Donchery—Le Dancourt—Vrigne-sur-Meuse. It was on the 6th of August that the brigade advanced from Donchery to Bouillon by St. Menges and Corbion; so it was on the morning of this day and not on the 2nd of August that the frontier was crossed.

The 3rd Hussars, also mentioned in the declaration of Trooper Requet, was brigaded with the 8th Hussars; it was stationed with and moved with this regiment from the 1st to the 6th of August.

As regards the 23rd and 27th Dragoons, they formed part of another division of the Cavalry Corps, which left the district of Charleville on the 6th of August and advanced on that day to Paliseul, by way of Givonnes and Bouillon, crossing the Belgian frontier at the same date as the 8th Hussars.

Trooper Requet certainly may have met these regiments at Bouillon, but not on the date indicated by him.

To sum up, Trooper Requet has reported facts which seem correct, but has given wrong dates; the 8th Hussars and the three regiments mentioned in his declaration all entered Belgium together by the route he indicates, but on the 6th of August, and not on the 2nd as he affirms.

Besides, certain points of this declaration are ambiguous; if his regiment arrived at La Neuville on the night July 31st–August 1st and remained there “two days,” and if it then marched to Donchery (50 kilometres) and then to Bouillon, how could it have entered Belgium on the 2nd of August?

II.

Trooper Saily, of the 21st Dragoons,* reported that the day after mobilisation was announced at Hirson his regiment had left its covering camp at Bossus, and had crossed the Belgian frontier and reached Bouillon the same day. The 5th Dragoons and some regiments of Cuirassiers, seen by Trooper Saily at Bouillon, must have crossed the frontier at the same date.

These regiments would therefore have entered Belgium on the 2nd of August.

The 21st and 5th Dragoons constituted a brigade of the same division to which the 8th Hussars, referred to in the first paragraph, belonged. All the division having moved at the same time, what has been said about the 8th Hussars applies generally to the 21st and 5th Dragoons.

Having arrived at their covering camp on the 1st of August, this brigade was encamped on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th of August in the district Aubenton—Hannapes—Bossus-lez-Remigny—Antheny.

On the 5th it proceeded to Donchery at the same time as the brigade of Hussars, and encamped in the district Vrigne-aux-Bois—Vivier-au-Court—Issoncourt—Lumies—Villers. Not until the 6th of August did it move to Bouillon in the same way as the brigade of Hussars.

Two errors must therefore be noted in the declaration of Trooper Saily:—

An error of date. The 21st Dragoons did not leave its covering camp the day after the date on which the mobilisation was known of at Hirson, but three days later (the 5th of August).

An error of fact. This regiment did not proceed direct from Bossus to Bouillon, but really to the Lumies, Vrigne-aux-Bois, Issoncourt district, which it left the next day, the 6th of August, to proceed to Bouillon. The day's march of the 5th of August is forgotten in the deposition of Cavalryman Saily.

III.

According to Trooper Cochard, of the 28th Dragoons,† the brigade formed by the 28th and 30th Dragoons left its garrison at Sedan on the 31st of July in the morning, and first marched to Mouzon, where it arrived at about mid-day, then marched in the evening of the same day by Bazeilles and La Chapelle, to Bouillon, which the 28th Dragoons entered on the 31st of July at 10 o'clock in the evening.

The next day, the 1st of August, the brigade went from Bouillon towards Arlon by way of Florenville, Belle Fontaine and Ste. Marie, “having marched eastwards on the 1st of August more than 40 kilometres on Belgian territory exclusively.”

* Text of the deposition of Trooper Saily (page 14 of *La Belgique Coupable*):—

“The 21st Dragoons were transported from garrison at Noyon in one day by railway to Hirson, and encamped the same day in the surrounding villages. The 2nd squadron, to which I belonged, was encamped at Bossus and remained there some days. The night of the last day, between 6 and 7 o'clock, I was at Bossus, at a barber's, who was also a tobacconist and retailer of drink. Whilst I was there the telephone bell rang. The barber went to the instrument, where some one spoke to him. After putting up the receiver he told me that they had informed him that mobilisation had just been ordered in France. I know very definitely that the 2nd squadron left Bossus the next day, and rejoined the other squadrons some time after. The regiment marched in one stage to Bouillon, a town in Belgium, near which the Franco-Belgian frontier was crossed. At the same time as the 21st Dragoons, the 5th French Dragoons also crossed it, as well as one or more regiments of Cuirassiers; I saw them plainly, but I do not know their numbers; there was also some artillery, but I don't know of what regiment. They all passed the Franco-Belgian frontier in the direction of Bouillon. This town, therefore, was reached the same day on the morning of which the 21st Dragoons left Bossus and the adjoining villages. The 21st Dragoons passed through Bouillon, and encamped that night in the immediate neighbourhood, the 2nd squadron in a little village with a church, some kilometres distant. On the morning of the next day our brigade, composed of the 21st and 5th Dragoons, continued its march in Belgium, in a northerly direction. There were also other regiments of French Cavalry, especially of Cuirassiers, with artillery, but I could not say anything more about them.

† Text of the deposition of Trooper Cochard (page 14 of *La Belgique Coupable*):—

“On the 31st of July, 1914, about 10 o'clock in the morning, the two regiments of Dragoons in garrison at Sedan, the 28th and 30th, took the field. At first they followed together the national road of Mouzon, where they arrived about mid-day. In the afternoon, between 2 and 2.30 or thereabouts, 4 guns of the 40th artillery in garrison at Mézières-Charleville, with their boxes of ammunition arrived at Mouzon. The brigade got on the march again in the direction of Sedan, the 28th Dragoons at the head, the cannon in the middle and the 30th Dragoons in the rear.

“We marched in fours, without precautions for safety on the march. My platoon, the 3rd of the 3rd squadron, formed the head of the column, and as I was in the 4th rank I could see very well all that happened in front of the brigade.

“When we arrived at the village of Bazeilles, on the road from Mouzon to Sedan, the column turned suddenly to the north and marched on the Belgian frontier by way of La Chapelle. The Belgian frontier was crossed on the 31st of July, 1914, about 9 o'clock in the evening or some quarter or half an hour later, on the road from La Chapelle to Bouillon, by the two regiments of French Dragoons and by the battery.

The 28th Dragoons encamped at St. Laurent, near Arlon, on the evening of the 1st of August.

Between Bouillon and Florenville the brigade encountered in Belgian territory the 4th Hussars and 3rd and 6th Cuirassiers.

This declaration, which would go to shew that on the 1st of August the whole division to which the 28th Dragoons belonged was in Belgian territory, is absolutely untrue.

True, the brigade made up of the 28th and 30th Dragoons certainly left Sedan on the 31st of July by the high road to Mouzon, but it pursued its way by Stenay and Jametz to reach its covering camp on the Othain.*

It arrived there towards 10 o'clock in the evening of the 31st of July. The 28th Dragoons encamped at St. Laurent-on-the-Othain (18 kilometres south-east of Montmédy), the 3rd Dragoons at Pillon (5 kilometres south-east of St. Laurent).

These two regiments did not quit their camp until the morning of the 5th of August; during all this time the outposts did not cross the Othain. On the 5th of August the division started and entered Belgium by way of Montmédy, Thonnelle, Avioth, Fagny, Bellefontaine. The 28th Dragoons formed the advance guard of the division, and at the end of the march occupied the advanced posts on the Semois at Breuvanne (15 kilometres north of Virton); the 30th Dragoons encamped at Tintigny (south-east of Breuvanne).

The two regiments of Cuirassiers, which Trooper Cochard is supposed to have met on the 1st of August between Bouillon and Florenville, were themselves at this date in camp on the Othain.

The 3rd Cuirassiers had, in fact, left its garrison at Vouziers on the 31st of July in the afternoon, and went into camp that day at Brieulles-on-the-Meuse (5 kilometres south of Dun). The next day it arrived at Mangiennes-en-Wœvre, where it remained till the morning of the 6th of August, on which date it entered Belgium at Jamaigne (10 kilometres from Florenville) by the same route as the 28th and 30th Dragoons.

As to the 6th Cuirassiers, its movements were similar.

Leaving Ste. Menchould on the 31st of July it went into camp au Consenvoye (15 kilometres north of Verdun), and marched the next day, the 1st of August, to Billy-sous-Mangiennes (7 kilometres east of Spincourt), where it remained until the 6th of August. On the 6th of August it followed the 3rd Cuirassiers in its march towards the Belgian frontier.

It is then incorrect to say that the 3rd and 6th Cuirassiers were on Belgian territory between Bouillon and Florenville on the morning of the 1st of August.

To sum up, the narrative of Trooper Cochard is nowhere near the facts on any point, except as to the date when his regiment left its garrison and the route it took after its departure.

The story abounds in confusions of dates and names. St. Laurent-on-the-Othain becomes St. Laurent-near-Arlon, which does not exist.

"Our officer, Lieutenant Malespieux, marched at the head of my platoon. At the spot where the road crosses the Belgian frontier a corporal of Belgian gendarmerie with four mounted gendarmes, easy to recognise by their uniforms and who were already waiting for us at this spot, presented themselves to the officer. These five gendarmes then took the head of the column and conducted it to Bouillon, a town situated in Belgian territory about 3 kilometres from the French frontier. A little before reaching Bouillon, the 30th Dragoons separated themselves from us to go and encamp in Belgium in the suburbs of the town. The 28th Dragoons only, with the battery, therefore entered Bouillon on the 31st of July, about 10 o'clock in the evening. The head of the regiment halted before the Mayor's house, and my captain commandant, Captain Lainez, entered it. At the end of about an hour a servant of the Mayor brought the quartering billets for the 28th Dragoons and for the battery; we had waited all this time before the Town Hall. I went immediately to my lodging, a barn in the town, with about 30 other Dragoons.

"The 28th French Dragoons and the battery therefore passed the night of 31st July-1st August in the Belgian town of Bouillon, whilst the 30th Dragoons encamped near, but all the same in Belgium. The Belgian population, far from shewing the least hostility, gave us, on the contrary, a very friendly reception.

"After the roll-call at 6 o'clock in the morning, Lieutenant Malespieux went on patrol towards the East with 25 Dragoons, of whom I was one. We alternately walked and trotted our horses along the high road from Bouillon to Arlon, advancing always towards the East in Belgian territory. From Bouillon the patrol passed by the Belgian villages of Sainte-Cécile, Chassepierre, Florenville, Pin, St. Vincent, Belle-Fontaine, Ste. Marie, and arrived at St. Laurent, not far from Arlon and more than 40 kilometres from Bouillon. We had then traversed on the 1st of August more than 40 kilometres towards the East, exclusively in Belgian territory. The patrol with its 25 men entered St. Laurent after 9 o'clock at night. Lieutenant Malespieux directed himself by the map, and sent no small patrols out on the way. About one hour later the whole of the 28th Dragoons and the battery arrived at St. Laurent. The men told us they had followed exactly the same road as our patrol. The battery and the 30th Dragoons had marched with the 28th to within a short distance of St. Laurent; a little before arriving there the 30th Dragoons separated from the column to go and camp in a Belgian village some kilometres distance. The two regiments of Dragoons and the battery had therefore on the 1st of August penetrated more than 40 kilometres into the interior of Belgium.

"When on the 1st of August the reconnoitring party, of which I was one, with 25 other cavalrymen was marching on the road from Bouillon to Arlon, between Bouillon and Florenville we passed near the road which crosses this last road in the open country. I recall that at about 500 metres beyond the cross-roads there was a village when we passed through more than 5 kilometres before Florenville. On the right hand of the main road, when we had passed where the two roads crossed, there were three regiments of French Cavalry. The men called out to us that they were the 3rd and 6th regiments of Cuirassiers and the 4th regiment of Hussars. When we had passed them the three regiments got on the march behind our patrol, which they followed for some hours. At the end of about 10 kilometres and after having marched through Florenville, the three regiments met by us on the morning of the 1st of August, 1914, in Belgian territory at the cross-roads, which had followed us in this way for some hours, turned to the left, and consequently advanced yet further into Belgium.

"In affirming that the two regiments of Dragoons and the battery crossed the Belgian frontier on the night of the 31st of July, 1914, and remained exclusively on Belgian territory at least during the whole week following, an error on my part is impossible, and for this reason—

"I had asked for and obtained about the 20th of July a fortnight's leave to go to my home at Rimogne, and this leave was to commence on the 1st of August. On the evening of the 30th of July there was no question of mobilisation, and I was certain that on the 1st of August, 1914, I should be able to go for a fortnight to my parents. On the 31st of July, 1914, in the morning, I ought, too, to have passed the medical inspection obligatory on each French soldier before going on leave. But on that day, instead of presenting myself to the doctor and taking advantage of my leave for the 1st of August, I had suddenly to start for the campaign. Those are details which I shall never forget. So, I repeat, any error of date on my part is impossible."

*The squadron to which Trooper Cochard belonged had certainly been stopped on the way to Mouzon to wait there for the arrival of a mounted detachment of the division coming from Charleville and to escort it to its destination. But it continued its march with this detachment in the evening of the 31st of July and went into camp at Stenay. On the morning of the next day it rejoined the division in its encampment. No more than the rest of the regiment did this squadron return to Sedan on the day when it left its garrison.

A certain number of places mentioned by chance recollection indicate the route traced by Trooper Cochard for his brigade on the 1st of August: "Ste. Cécile, where the regiment was encamped on the 18th of August, Chassepierre passed the same day, Florenville and Pin passed or seen almost each day from the 6th to the 18th of August, St. Vincent occupied by the 28th Dragoons on the 7th of August, Bellefontaine on the route of the entry into Belgium on the 6th of August." (Report of Lieutenant-Colonel commanding the 28th Dragoons).

Besides, one finds in the declarations of Trooper Cochard facts invented in every particular; thus the route Bazeilles—La Chapelle—Bouillon, by which the 28th Dragoons entered Belgium according to him, is 25 kilometres from the route actually followed by the regiment (Montmédy—Avioth—Bellefontaine).

Moreover, the cantonment which he says his regiment occupied at Bouillon on the 31st of July in the evening cannot be attributed to confusion on his part, for "never at any moment was a unit of the 28th Dragoons quartered at Bouillon nor did it pass through this town." (Report of Lieutenant-Colonel commanding the 28th Dragoons).

It is the same with the route imagined by him—with so much precision—for the march made by his regiment on the 1st of August from Bouillon to Arlon, &c. . . .

The declarations of Cochard would be suspect on other accounts, even though the lie were not given them by the facts.

The information furnished by his commanding officer about this trooper is in fact bad:—

"Mediocre soldier of limited intelligence, ill-natured, sly, and very independent character, Cochard entirely answered to the type of a poacher, a man of the woods, which he boasted of being."

The incorrectness of his information extends to his duties: attached as a cyclist to the 3rd squadron of the 28th Dragoons, he was never on a horse in the ranks as he gives us to understand (§ 1, 6, 7, of his declaration).

It should be added that his disappearance on the 22nd of August remains suspicious, and has provoked the most unfavourable inferences on the part of his commanding officers.

Finally, the three depositions which have been produced in this German work *Belgiens Schuld*, are given the lie by the facts:—

The first two, relatively correct in matter, are inaccurate as to dates.

The third is a tissue of lies having no connection with reality.

Appended hereto are:—

1. An extract from the diary of the march for the period 31st of July to 6th of August of the 3rd Division of Cavalry, to which the 3rd Hussars (Trooper Bellard) and the 21st Dragoons (Trooper Sailly) belonged.

2. A copy of the marching orders of this division for the 6th of August, the date on which it actually entered Belgium.

3. A copy of the report of the Lieutenant-Colonel commanding the 28th Dragoons in reference to the deposition made by Trooper Cochard.

(Signed) PELLÉ.

No. 1.

EXTRACT FROM THE DIARY OF THE MARCH OF THE 3RD C. D.

31st July, 1914.—Mobilisation of the 3rd C. D. and start for camp.

1st August.—Arrival at the site of the camp.

2nd August (5th Army).—Positions of units in camp:—

H. Q.: Aubenton.

Cuirassiers: Rumigny—Aouste—La Cerleau—Prez.

Dragoons: Aubenton—Hannappes—Bossus-lez-Rumigny—Antheny.

Hussars: Girondele—Foulzy—Auvillers and La Neuville-aux-Tourneurs.

Artillery: Estrebay.

Cyclists: Aubenton.

Cyclist sappers: Rumigny.

Commissariat: Ligny-lez-Aubenton.

3rd August.—Arrival of the 2nd echelon of H. Q. and of the regiments which occupied the same encampments as their respective units.

4th August.—Rest in camp.

5th August (1st, 3rd, 5th C. D. *Sordet corps*).—Departure, 5 o'clock in the morning. On an order No. 1. received from the Cavalry Corps, the division marched in two columns.

Southern column: Brigade of Cuirassiers: by the route Aubigny—Rouvray—Servion—Hardoncelle Haudrecy—Warcq—Mézières—Flize.

Northern column: Brigade of Hussars, Dragoons and Artillery, T. C. by the route Belle Epine—Maubert-Fontaine—Lonny—Cliron—Charleville—Le Theux.

They occupied the following cantonments:—

H. Q.: Donchery.

Hussars: Donchery—Le Dancourt—Vrigne-Meuse.

Dragoons: Vrigne-au-Bois—Vivier-au-Court—Issoncourt—Lumes and Villers.

Cuirassiers: Dam-le-Mesnil—Nouvion—Flize—Etan.

Artillery: Vivier-au-Court.

Very tiring march owing to the nature of the ground.

6th August.—By order No. 3 of the Cavalry Corps the 3rd C. D. left at 7.30 a.m. to occupy the zone Bouillon (H. Q.)—Ucimont—Noirefontaine.

Enthusiastic reception by the Belgian population.

The 1st C. D. is in advance towards Paliseul (reconnoitring order No. 4) and the 5th C. D. towards Bertrix.

CAVALRY DIVISION
HEADQUARTERS
No. 3.

Donchery,
6th August, 1914,
5 o'clock.

MARCHING ORDER OF THE 6TH OF AUGUST.

I. The 3rd C. D. must proceed to-day to the zone Bouillon (H. Q.)—Ucimont—Noirefontaine, having in front of it the 1st C. D. towards Paliseul and the 5th towards Bertrix.

II. *Route*.—St. Menges—Bouillon (by Corbion).

III. *Starting point*.—Intersection of the roads from Donchery to Bosséval and from Vrigne-au-Bois to St. Menges (2 km. 500 west of St. Menges).

IV. Order at starting point :—

<i>Advance Guard</i>	-	-	-	{	Brigade of Dragoons	-	-	-	-	-	-	}	at 8 o'clock	
					Cyclist sappers	-	-	-	-	-	-			-
<i>Main Body</i>	-	-	-	{	A regiment of light horse	-	-	-	-	-	-	}	at 8.45.	
					Artillery	-	-	-	-	-	-			-
					A regiment of light horse	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	}	at 9.5.
					Brigade of Cuirassiers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
					T. C.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
Half squadron of rear guard	-	-	-	-	-	-	-							

V. The General of Division will march between the advance guard and the main body.

VI. Word : Albert—Arlon, from the 6th of August, 6 p.m., to the 7th August, *same time*.

2ND PART.

Revictualling will take place at 7 o'clock at the railway station at Donchery.

All the T. R. will depart afterwards from Donchery to march on Bouillon by the route of Sedan, in the rear the T. R. of the 5th C. D., who will also revictual at Donchery and follow the same route.

(Signed) DEVUNS.

CORPS OF CAVALRY
STAFF.

H. Q. Sedan,
6th August, 1914 (1.45).

GENERAL ORDER NO. 2.

French Map of 200,000th.

To-day, the 6th of August, the cavalry corps will proceed to the north of the Semois.

Object : To determine the apparent position of the enemy on the eastern frontier of Belgium.

To stop the march of enemy columns.

To clear the district of hostile cavalry.

1st C. D. : Direction of Paliseul by the high road of Bouillon.

5th C. D. : Direction of Bertrix by Dohan.

3rd C. D. : Direction of Bouillon by St. Menges—Corbion.

Hour of departure : The head of the main body of the 1st C. D. will leave Givonne at 7.30 ; the other divisions will fall in with this movement.

Exploration :

1st C. D. : Sector to the north of the road from Paliseul to Ochamps and Recogne and of the Bastogne Railway.

Objectives : Laroche, Houffalize, Bastogne.

5th C. D. sector south of the said line.

Objectives : Martelange—Attert, where the sector of the 4th C. D. begins.—

The General in command will march with the 1st C. D.

The convoys will be mustered in rear of the columns, that of the 3rd C. D. passing by Sedan will follow immediately that of the 5th C. D.

The cyclist company of the 3rd C. D. will rejoin its division ; it will receive orders from the General commanding the 8th Brigade.

The 4th C. D. proceeds in the district of 'Etalle ; the 5th C. D. will get into communication with this 4th division, which comes from Mangiennes.

The 8th Brigade of Infantry supports the movement of the cavalry corps with a regiment which will hold the approaches of the Semois on the front Bouillon—Rochehaut—Vresse.

At the end of the march,

The 1st C. D. will occupy the zone Opont—Framont—Paliseul (H. Q.)—Naomé.

The 5th C. D. zone Jehonville—Bertrix—Fays-les-Veneurs—Offagne, H. Q. at Bertrix.

3rd C. D. zone Mogimont—Bellevaux—Noirefontaine—Bouillon (H. Q.)—Ucimont.

A battalion of the 45th Infantry will encamp at Bouillon.

The H. Q. of the Cavalry Corps at Bouillon.

Word : Albert—Arlon.

From 6th August, 6 p.m., to 7th August at same time.

Supply : Revictualling at 7 o'clock at the G. R. A. V. Donchery.

3rd C. D. Sedan ; 1st C. D. Donchery.

After revictualling the regimental trains will immediately rejoin their divisions.

All the oats brought by the daily train and not taken by the regimental trains will be unloaded to form a dépôt at Sedan.

The General : SORDET.

P. A. Chief of the Headquarters Staff,

DE MONTBÉLIARD.

4TH CAVALRY DIVISION.

4TH BRIGADE OF DRAGOONS.

28th Regiment of Dragoons.

10th August, 1915.

Lieutenant-Colonel d'Epenoux, commanding the 28th Regiment of Dragoons to the General commanding the 4th Cavalry Division.

The so-called deposition of Trooper Cochard is a mass of confusion and of the grossest errors.

I will mention them in order, paragraph by paragraph, and will then speak of their author.

1.—On the 31st of July, 1914, the 4th Brigade of Dragoons left Sedan at 11.30 in the order: 30th Dragoons, 28th Dragoons. It followed without any deviation the route: Bazeilles, Douzy, Mouzon, Stenay, where it made a halt of 1 hr. 15 min., then Baalon, Jametz, Vitarville, and thence reached its camping ground to the south of the Othain.

The village of St. Laurent-on-the-Othain, the most northerly of the encampments of the division, was assigned to the 28th Dragoons, who arrived there on the 31st of July at 10 p.m. in full, except the 3rd squadron (Captain Laine), left on the way at Mouzon. St. Laurent-on-the-Othain is situated about 9 kilometres south-west of Longuyon.

The 3rd squadron was ordered to wait at Mouzon not for four guns, but for the batteries of the 4th division, which were coming from Mézières-Charleville, and to convoy them afterwards to their destination. The batteries arrived at Mouzon in the evening and continued their way, under the escort of the 3rd squadron only, to Stenay; where this column stopped at 10 p.m. to pass the night of the 31st July—1st August there.

They resumed their march under the same conditions early on the 1st of August, and rejoined the division in its camp between 10 and 10.30 a.m.

Trooper Cochard was attached to the 3rd squadron as a cyclist. He left Sedan on a bicycle and never had any other means of locomotion. He was not, therefore, in the ranks at any moment of the campaign and marched within reach of his captain, who made use of him when necessary for his messages.

2-3.—The movements and route indicated in these paragraphs are a gross invention. The 4th Division remained until the morning of the 6th of August in its camp of the 31st of July, between the Othain and the Loison. The 28th Dragoons did not leave St. Laurent-on-the-Othain. Besides, on the arrival in this neighbourhood, the order had been given to the units engaged in reconnoitring and out-post duty never to approach to within 10 kilometres of the frontier. This order was strictly observed until the official notice of the declaration of war.

4.—If one could admit the possibility of errors of date and place of such importance, one would be inclined to suppose that Trooper Cochard had confused Bouillon and Stenay and lost count of the five days which elapsed before the regiment actually crossed the Belgian frontier.

Never for a moment was a unit of the 28th Dragoons stationed at Bouillon, nor did they ever even pass through this town.

If one puts Stenay in place of Bouillon, in Cochard's story, the entry into camp passed pretty nearly as he describes it, with this great difference, that the question was of the encampment of a whole company of artillery and a single squadron, and not of a whole regiment, with only four guns or one battery.

So far as concerns the crossing of the frontier, I have said that the 28th Dragoons, like the other regiments of the division, did not leave its camp from the start until the 6th of August. On the morning of that day the 28th Dragoons, which had detached for reconnoitring purposes towards the north, the 1st squadron and a platoon of the 2nd, left St. Laurent-on-the-Othain and formed the advance guard of the 4th division in its march into Belgium by Montmédy, Thonnelle, Avioth, Margny, Bellefontaine, Tintigny, Jamoigne. The 3rd squadron led and the platoon of Lieutenant Malézieux formed the head of the advance guard.

5.—The main body of the division encamped on the night of the 6th of August at Jamoigne and the neighbourhood, the 30th Dragoons with a battery at Tintigny, the 28th Dragoons covered the camp to the north, occupying Breuvanne, the fords of the Semois and Rossignol, stretched out further north.

6.—In this paragraph Cochard begins by transforming the head of the advance guard of Lieutenant Malézieux into a patrol. He gives himself a place in it. "We rode on horseback," he says, though he had never ridden but on a bicycle, near and, under the orders of his captain. Then he joins Arlon and Bouillon, 60 kilometres at least apart, by a Government road, and mentions by chance the names which he remembers: Ste. Cécile, where the regiment encamped on the 18th of August; Chassepierre, passed the same day; Florenville, Pin, passed through or seen nearly every day between the 6th and 18th of August; St. Vincent, occupied by the 28th Dragoons on the 7th; Bellefontaine, on the route of the entry into Belgium on the 6th of August. Finally, he ends up by setting out the story, vaguely remembered, which "the men" had told him, of the march of the brigade to St. Laurent on the 1st of August. I have said he was not present at it, for he had remained with the 3rd squadron at Mouzon.

7.—At paragraph 7 he seems to have forgotten his bicycle more than ever, since on the 1st of August he still rode on horseback, but across country this time, and over a pretty long course from Bouillon to Florenville, then he discovers the spot where the two roads from Bouillon to Arlon and Bouillon to Florenville cross. It is useless to insist further on his vague story of his meeting with three other regiments of the division.

8.—Finally, the narrative of Trooper Cochard finishes with an irrefutable proof, as he thinks, of his veracity; he was to go on leave and had received, about the 20th of July, a fortnight's holiday to go home to Rimogne. I cannot ascertain whether Cochard could have hoped for leave on this date or not. Captain Laine has not been with the regiment for six months, and the principal Quarter Master has been killed. I remark, however, that this time of the year is not usually that for long leave; that it is not usual to sign leave before the medical visit and still less to send it to the interested party ten days beforehand.

This said, I take up again the story of Cochard. He ought to have gone to the doctor on the 31st before mid-day. He did not go, and yet "on the evening of the 31st they knew nothing." He had,

however, left Sedan the same day, about 10 o'clock in the morning, (1) to cross the frontier about 9 in the evening (2) and arrive at Bouillon about 10 in the evening (4).

The regiment would thus have taken 12 hours to march without let or hindrance the 16 kilometres which separated Sedan from Bouillon.

To sum up, the errors of the so-called evidence of Cochard are so gross, so apparent, checking them is so easy, that their acceptance seems even more improbable than their authenticity.

REMARKS ON TROOPER GUSTAVE COCHARD.

This trooper, so ill-favoured physically that his comrades have nicknamed him "the Gorilla," was a very mediocre soldier, a bad horseman, but a strong cyclist, hence his employment. Of limited intelligence, ill-natured, sly and very independent character, Cochard quite answered to the character of a poacher, a man of the woods, which he boasted of being. His disappearance on the 22nd of August is very suspicious, and the circumstances in which it took place ought to be related. On the 21st of August the 28th Dragoons had passed some hours of the night at Houdrémont and Bièvre.

In the early hours of the 22nd the 3rd squadron (with which was the cyclist Cochard) was detached to reconnoitre towards Beauraing. This squadron was unable to pass Froidefontaine, where it came into collision with numerous enemy detachments. It engaged them for some time, but was little by little so far surrounded that its patrols informed it that there was only one direction still open. It therefore left Froidefontaine with the main body, leaving Lieutenant de Poret with six troopers to try and cross the enemy's lines and if possible reach Beauraing. Some time after this reconnoitring party fell into an ambush, had some horses killed and two troopers wounded; now, on leaving Froidefontaine, Captain Laine noticed the absence of his cyclist Cochard, and tried in vain to find him; he had disappeared and was never seen again.

The squadron rejoined the regiment in the night at Rienne. The disappearance of Cochard under these circumstances is at least singular, and we may ask if the surprise of which the reconnoitring party of Lieutenant de Poret was the victim was not a consequence thereof.

(Signed) Lieutenant-Colonel D'ÉPENOUX.

IX.

LETTERS OF THE BISHOP OF NAMUR OF THE 6TH AND 7TH NOVEMBER, 1915 (WITH A MEMORANDUM DATED THE 31ST OCTOBER), AND OF THE BISHOP OF LIÉGE OF THE 1ST NOVEMBER, 1915, protesting, so far as concerns their dioceses, against the allegations contained in the "German White Book" of the 10th May, 1915, and denouncing the atrocities committed by the German troops.

A.

LETTERS OF THE BISHOP OF NAMUR.

1. *Letter of the Bishop of Namur to His Holiness the Pope.*

Namur,
7th November, 1915.

VERY HOLY FATHER,

A source of new and no less bitter sorrow has been added to the sufferings caused us last year by the disasters of war.

Not satisfied with having, during her terrible invasion, treated innocent Belgium with inhumanity, Germany undertakes to exculpate herself by accusing us of being the sole cause of our own troubles. To this end she has published a "White Book" on "The Civilian War waged in Belgium in defiance of International Law," a book of which Your Holiness will have heard.

By the lively and touching sympathy which Your Holiness has shewn to us from the beginning of our trials, we, the clergy and the faithful, have all of us been consoled and comforted. Desiring earnestly to make ourselves worthy of the continuance of this notable goodwill, we wish firmly, with the help of God, to maintain the good name of our beloved country and to clear the Catholic priests and our Christian people from the grave accusations with which they are overwhelmed. Moved by these thoughts we have undertaken the refutation of the "White Book."

May it please Your Holiness to deign to examine my memorandum of the 31st of October, the letter of the Bishop of Liège, dated the 1st of November, and the letter of the 6th of November, which I addressed to His Excellency the Military Governor of the occupied part of Belgium, enclosing the first two documents.

After a long study, minute and impartial, of the incidents which took place in our two dioceses—both being here accused to a very large extent—we affirm before God, Mgr. the Bishop of Liège and I, that the German accusations are void of all foundation and calumnious, that the inhabitants of our dioceses, priests and laymen, are innocent, that their hands are not soiled by any of the crimes imputed to them, in a word, that the Belgians remain worthy of the Catholic and Roman faith which they glory in professing.

We think it proper to express to Your Holiness that a special reason makes the intervention of the Bishops in this question legitimate: it is that at the present time, under the system of strict compulsion which oppresses us, no Belgian citizen is in a position to attempt any defence without exposing himself to the most severe punishment. But we, authorised by the liberty of our ministry, have determined to raise our voice and to prevent universal credence of serious accusations contrary to the truth and detrimental to our honour.

May I be permitted to add one word about my personal memorandum?

In the choice of facts, as in my estimate of them, I have been obliged to observe in my statement a tone of discretion and moderation which I am very far from feeling, but which a compulsory deference to the wishes of the occupying authority compels me to assume.

In conclusion, Mgr. the Bishop of Liège and I express our firm confidence that Your Holiness will not allow your faith in the honesty, the integrity and the irreproachable conduct of the Belgian people to be shaken. May Your Holiness continue the benevolent support, the great need of which they feel more deeply from day to day.

On their side—we are happy to assure Your Holiness—our flocks do not slacken in their fidelity and devotion to Your August Person.

With these sentiments I prostrate myself very humbly at the feet of Your Holiness, and beg You to accord to all of us the favour of Your Apostolic Blessing.

The very humble and obedient servant and son of Your Holiness.

† THOMAS LOUIS,
Bishop of Namur

2. LETTER OF THE BISHOP OF NAMUR TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF OCCUPIED BELGIUM.

To His Excellency the Governor-General at Brussels.

Namur,
6th November, 1915.

EXCELLENCY,

I have the honour of thanking your Excellency again for your kindness in procuring for me the "White Book" published by the German Government on "The Civilian War waged in Belgium in defiance of International Law."

As I told your Excellency in a verbal message, I could not remain insensible or indifferent when I saw accusations made officially against the priests and the faithful of my diocese, *which I consider void of all foundation and detrimental to their honour.*

I have already made plain to Your Excellency this attitude and these sentiments in my memorandum of the 10th of April, 1915. This was with reference to a despatch of the Prussian Minister of War to the Imperial Chancellor, a despatch of which I learnt from the Dutch press and which contained grave accusations in our case, though yet feeble enough as compared with those of the "White Book."

There is nothing astonishing in my feeling myself compelled to-day by a *serious conscientious duty* to renew my protest to the occupying authority, and with this end in view to address to it a statement which establishes what I affirm to be the historic truth about each of the facts treated in the "White Book."

This statement will be found recorded in the enclosed memorandum.

As a certain number of parishes in his diocese have also been referred to in the "White Book," Mgr. the Bishop of Liège desires to add his protest to mine. He has recorded it in a separate document, which Your Excellency will also find enclosed.

I am bound to declare that in no phrase of my report have I said all I think, taking care to restrain the expression of the astonishment or rather of the indignation caused me at every page by the assertions of the German publication.

Notwithstanding this, Your Excellency will perhaps find in my work some expressions marked by severity, even by harshness.

If this is so, I do not hesitate to ask Your Excellency to set against these expressions the much more severe terms used in the "White Book," and also to consider the sorrow which oppresses me at the persistence of the calumny. And this twofold consideration will make my language explicable.

May we cherish the hope that our Episcopal intervention will induce the German Government to examine more closely and impartially the actions for which their own armies are blamed? If it decides to do so it will doubtless recognise how serious and how general these actions are and will feel itself bound to enact the repressive measures which justice and humanity demand.

If we must renounce this hope, if once more the German authorities dispute the irrefutable truth of our inquiry, will it not decide to adopt the only means which remain of bringing the whole matter to light; namely, the inquiry proposed several times by the Belgian Episcopate, an inquiry conducted at once by Belgian and German delegates under the presidency of a neutral?

In conclusion, I have the honour of informing Your Excellency that I propose to address a copy of my memorandum of the 31st of October to His Holiness, Pope Benedict XV., to the Belgian Episcopate and to the representatives of neutral countries resident at Brussels.

May Your Excellency condescend to accept the assurance of my high consideration.

† THOMAS LOUIS,
Bishop of Namur.

3. PROTEST OF THE BISHOP OF NAMUR AGAINST THE ACCUSATIONS OF THE "WHITE BOOK."*

(Memorandum of the 31st October, 1915)

(a).—*Introductory.*

From the day on which she entered upon our soil and put our towns and villages to fire and blood, Germany persistently pursues a campaign of accusations against the Belgian people.

She hopes by these means to wash her hands of the stains contracted in face of the world.

We have followed the steps of this enterprise from the beginning with profound grief and bitterness.

It has just received its official crown by the publication of the "White Book." It is a supreme attempt—a last attempt, at justification.

* This memorandum is printed from a copy in which the author made some small alterations in the matter of form.

We consider it an imperative duty of our charge over our flock not to keep silence, but to address to the occupying authority an energetic protest affirming and proving at once the culpability of the German army and the innocence of those who inhabit our diocese.

* * *

Germany has employed a very simple process in her campaign against the Belgian people. It may be summed up in a single phrase—a phrase which, from the beginning of the war, has been daily repeated by the invading armies and which all the echoes have repeated again throughout the world :

They fired on us !

This assertion is pleaded to justify every violence, to excuse every cruelty. On the 9th of August a notice published in Belgium gives ground for sinister anticipations :—

“*9th August.*—The reports on the fighting round Liège give us to understand that the inhabitants have taken part in the fighting. They have fired from ambush on the troops and the doctors on duty. The people have committed cruelties on the wounded. It may be that these attacks are the result of the crowding together of the population in these industrial districts. But it may also be that a war of *francs-tireurs* has been prepared in France and Belgium and may be directed against our troops. If this be so, and the renewal of these attacks proves it, our adversaries must only thank themselves if the war be carried on with inexorable severity, even against the civil population when in fault.”*

This is imprudent language in the mouths of the chiefs of armies, who, instead of furnishing the least occasion for excesses, ought to enjoin unceasingly respect for civilians, and to put a bridle on the violent feelings which so easily find their way into the midst of armies.

The next day, 10th of August, a proclamation, signed by Von Stein, converts into an accomplished fact what was only mentioned hypothetically the day before. It says on the subject of the taking of Liège :—

“ . . . Difficulties have arisen principally from the extraordinarily unfavourable nature of the ground. . . . also from the underhand participation in the fighting of all the population, even the women. They fired from ambush in inhabited places and forests, on our troops and also on the doctors who were caring for the wounded, and on the wounded themselves. It has been a painful and desperate fight ; entire localities have had to be destroyed. . . .”†

So the thing was done. From the first entry into Belgium the belief in the existence of *francs-tireurs* was countenanced in the minds of the soldiers.‡ This legend is still propagated from day to day in the German army, as a deadly microbe is developed in the broth of culture. This legend is hawked about daily and given the appearance of truth by a Press without restraint, whose provocative and exciting conduct has been very well stigmatised in all the neutral countries.§ After a few days there was no longer a single German soldier who did not cry out on every occasion : They fired on us !

* * *

It would be interesting to note the stereotyped form in which the legend of *francs-tireurs* appeared daily in the German press ; as also the propaganda made by pictures, whether in the illustrated papers or by means of photographic cards.|| But this would carry us too far. We will confine ourselves to relating the manner in which it is presented in *official circles*.

On the 2nd of September, 1914, the Imperial Chancellor addressed a communication to the representatives of the American press : “ England will tell your compatriots,” says he, “ that German troops have burnt towns and villages in Belgium, but she will hide from them that young Belgian girls have torn out the eyes of the defenceless wounded on the battlefield. Men employed in Belgian towns have invited our officers to dine with them and have killed them, shooting them from under the table. Against the law of nations the Belgian civil population has been called to arms and, after having first given our troops a kind welcome, has attacked them from behind with hidden arms in the most cruel fashion. The Belgian women have cut the throats of soldiers who were resting billeted at their houses.”¶

Finally, the Emperor himself, in a celebrated message to President Wilson, testifies that he has not escaped this universal suggestion :—

“ The Belgian Government has publicly encouraged the civil population to join in the fighting, and has for a long time carefully organised the resistance. . . . The cruelties committed in this guerilla warfare, even by women and priests, on wounded soldiers, doctors and ambulance attendants, have been such that my generals have been at last obliged to employ the most severe methods of punishing the guilty and of terrorising the blood-thirsty population, thus preventing it from continuing its murders and deeds of horror. Some villages and even the ancient city of Louvain, except its beautiful Town Hall, have had to be destroyed. . . .”**

Against these serious accusations of the head of the German nation, we have protested strongly, especially against those which concern the clergy of Namur, and we gave a personal contradiction to His Excellency the Military Governor of Namur on the day after the publication of the telegram in the German papers.

Truth compels us to recognise that some organs of the German press have sided with our opinions, at first timidly, afterwards with more decision,†† demonstrating the baselessness of the various accusations

* *Warnung vor dem Franktireur-Krieg. Kriegs-Depeschen*, August, 1914.

† *Die Wahrheit über Lüttich (Kriegs-Depeschen)*, August, 1914.

‡ As early as September, 1913, the *Gazette du Rhin et de Westphalie* wrote under the signature of a German higher officer in Paris : “ One may be sure that in case of war against Germany legions of *francs-tireurs* will be organised.”

§ “ This Press has produced an over-excitement of the German people to an extent hitherto unheard of in the world’s history.” (*Clerfey Echo*, 1915, No. 13).

¶ A postcard was sold on the 15th of September, 1914, at Namur, and was immediately forbidden by the German authorities. It represented an imaginary Grand Square of Namur with Flemish gables and the inscription : “ Our troops fighting with the *francs-tireurs* at Namur.” (Böttger, Cologne).

The cattle trucks which carried our poor fellow-citizens into exile were labelled “ *Francs-tireurs*,” and provoked outbursts of anger on their journey.

¶ *Der Reichskanzler an America (Kriegs-Depeschen)*, September, 1914).

** *Kriegs-Depeschen*, September, 1914.

†† *Der Fels*, September and November, 1914, January, February, March, 1915. *Badische Beobachter*, No. 248.

which condemned priests as *francs-tireurs*,* and representing the legends of Belgian atrocities as absurdities which make the serious reader smile.

But, meanwhile, suggestion and over-excitement had done their inevitable work.

What happened in our two provinces during the passage of troops? Every time a shot was heard, they did not even take the trouble to find out if it was fired by a German soldier or a Belgian or French soldier, or a civilian. One explanation only was admissible: civilians have fired on us!

That is the history of the destruction of all our villages, of the murder of all our civilians. These facts are known, and their extent has succeeded in alarming the rulers of Germany themselves. These are what have been called "the German atrocities,"† and the Belgian people believe in them, because it has known, undergone, and lived through them, and is convinced of its own innocence.

* * *

In a strange appeal "to the good sense and the faith of Belgian Catholics,"‡ an appeal which in reality is only a series of unjustified charges, a French ecclesiastic residing at Munich thought fit to write that "It would be as unreasonable as unjust to impute to the German people and their sovereign the faults of which a number, even a large number, of the military have been guilty."

We cannot bring ourselves to look at things in this way. Nor will it be accepted, we believe, by those who read our work. What we have written and what remains to be written establishes this clearly; the work of German troops in the diocese did not confine itself, as our accuser has also written, to "some misdeeds, true or false, which may be put to the account of the soldiery." It deals with a body of serious acts, very serious, perfectly established, which involve responsibilities, whatever may be said.

Our work also demolishes the estimate of the disasters caused in Belgium made by the author of "The German War and Catholicism." According to this author, "There remains of these horrors a balance confined to mistakes, errors, or isolated faults, which one can excuse, and for which one could not hold the German army, any more than the people, responsible."§ He writes also, "It is natural and absolutely incontestable that in an army of a million men there should be baser elements who will be guilty of misconduct; but it is unjust to impute individual excesses to the whole army."||

They will find out by reading my memorandum that the balance in dispute is not so negligible; it treats, not of individual misconduct and excesses, but of a general system, deliberate and continuous.

For the rest we may remark that this last author—an ecclesiastic of Paderborn—has taken upon himself to revive all the calumnies dealt with in our memorandum, with as much simplicity as complaisance. He goes as far as to maintain, and to try to prove, that our priests have taken part in the pretended war of *francs-tireurs*. If here and there he shews us a little pity, one would say that he wishes thereby to give himself the right to accuse us afterwards with more coldness and harshness. We refute his book by refuting the "White Book," on which he relies. But in truth it is bitter and sad to see with what unanimity our detractors fall upon a little country, oppressed and bound, which cannot even open its mouth to defend itself.

Germany has made many prodigious efforts to relieve itself of responsibility and to throw it on the Belgian people.

These efforts fall into two categories: the one proceeding from *private individuals*, the other from *official personages*, which find expression in the "White Book."

Our memorandum will deal with both the one and the other; for, resolved to avenge the truth and right to the utmost of our powers, we would not pass over any one of the attempts of the enemy.

(b.)—*Individual attempts to throw the Responsibility for German Atrocities on the Belgian People.*

We remember that the first position of the German scientists was to deny *a priori* the German atrocities as incompatible with their culture.

Certain professors of psychology rejected the evidence produced against the troops of the Empire or sought to weaken it by representing it as the inventions and distortions to be attributed to *hysteria*, to the *psychosis of the masses*.¶ It was, for example, in the name of this principle, that they declared it improbable that the Germans had thrown explosive bombs into houses. But let them apply this theory of psychosis to the German soldiers and people who have shown themselves so amenable to the most fantastic suggestions, so open to the most hazardous assertions!

As knowledge of the facts reached Germany, we find new means of defence substituted for the general systematic denial.

"We have often repeated," writes a German paper, "that the method employed up to the present time is not a happy one. When one wishes to arrive at the end one has in view in neutral countries, it is not sufficient to say: all is calumny, falsehood, miserable fantasy. . . . In an army of millions there are always individuals who commit excesses.**

The tactics are to consist no longer of a denial, but of *explanations and excuses for the actions*, coupled with attacks on the victim.

They impute responsibility, for example, for the destruction committed in Belgium to Belgian or

* *Der Fels*, October, November, December, 1914, and January, 1915 (Andenne); October, November, 1914 (Louvain); December, 1914 (Les Bulles). *Köln. Volksz.*, 20th January, 1915, etc.

† Are not many of these excesses due to alcohol? Everywhere we hear of cellars empty, liquor shops sacked! It must be recognised that the Press has not taken up a becoming attitude with regard to these excesses, when one reads again "The French Lesson" (give me some wine, &c.), published by the *Frankf. Zeitung* under the signature of Hartmann. Armies have no need of such incentives to drunkenness and licence.

‡ *L'Information* of Brussels, 3rd October, 1915.

§ *Der deutsche Krieg und der Katholizismus*, p. 60. Verlag und Druck der Germania, Berlin, 1915.

|| *Ibid.*, p. 126.

¶ Dr. Moll, President of the Psychological Society of Berlin, in the *Vossische Zeitung* of the 29th September, 1914;

** *Berliner Tageblatt*, 15th May, 1915, No. 245.

French soldiers who had put on civilian dress. "These soldiers," writes Grasshoff, in his wicked book on the guilt of Belgium,* "were hidden by the inhabitants of towns and villages, and let loose, at the right moment, on the German columns, who suspected nothing." Thereupon reprisals. It is needless to say that these accusations rest on no proof and are contradicted by the facts. If disguised soldiers had fired, the Germans must have found Belgian or French soldiers among the prisoners and those shot. Yet they did not find one.

* * *

But they impute the fault, above all, to the Civic Guard.

First of all, it is opportune to mention that the Civic Guard is not an organisation improvised at the moment when war began, but a national institution, a permanent element of the public force, a normal method of securing order in certain circumstances.

The mobilisation of the army properly so-called and comprising in it the gendarmerie, made it very useful, if not necessary, to call up this supplementary body. There was occasion to employ not only the *active* Guards, who were already doing permanent duty in the towns and important localities, and were provided with military equipment, but even the Reserves, those of the country districts, who had little to do in time of peace, but whose mobilisation became necessary in time of war for preserving order, for patrol, and for public safety.

In all executive measures taken the Government of the country and the provincial administrations conformed minutely to the rules of the Hague Conference. They ordered, rigorously, in particular, distinctive badges, recognisable at a distance; the carrying of arms openly; subordination to responsible chiefs; respect, in the operations, to the laws and customs of war. We may call attention to the circulars regulating these different points.

The Belgians on their side have always respected these provisions with scrupulous care.

Thus organised, the Civic Guard had the right to carry arms, to participate in hostilities, to attack the enemy.

As a fact, their duty has generally been limited, for the guards in towns, to supplementing the garrison on duty in the towns, and for the guards of rural districts, to the duties of patrol and public safety.

In our diocese, in consequence of the rapidity of the invasion, it was not always possible to incorporate the rural guards. The greater part of those who did duty had not been armed. Where they have done duty, their co-operation has been very useful in preserving public order, and has not given rise to the least misconduct or inconvenience.

This is the result of the very detailed inquiry we have made. If there were any reprehensible acts they have escaped our investigations.

Let us see now what has been the attitude of Germany. Starting with the preconceived notion that the Government had organised a war of *francs-tireurs*; incapable, on the other hand, of making the proof clear and convincing, the Germans set themselves to represent the Civic Guard as a distorted, fraudulent, dishonest means of raising a popular conflict in the country.

They did not hesitate to misrepresent the spirit of the institution and to impute disloyal manoeuvres to the Belgian authorities without any proof.

"Belgium," writes one of them,† "called out its Landwehr, armed the men either with rifles or air-guns, difficult to recognise as arms, then sent them to their homes. The Belgian Government itself then prepared a regular war of *francs-tireurs* at the moment when we were obliged to cross the Belgian frontier, Belgium having violated her neutrality. From this moment terrible news accumulated.

In the same chapter he dares to assert, as the height of the barbarity of the whole war, that the townspeople of Louvain fired on the German soldiers who were saving the Town Hall, the church and its pictures!

On the subject of the Reserves of the Civic Guard, another writer‡ dreams of a plot hatched by the Belgian Government to excite the intellectual world against Germany! Here are the main lines of this plan: At the opening of the invasion, to give to the Press the order to stir up the people and induce them to arm themselves; after letting loose this popular war to make a show of reproving it, and to maintain an equivocal attitude; finally, to throw out the idea that the *francs-tireurs* business has been invented by the German armies to appease their thirst for blood! . . .

And these serious assertions are supported by a proclamation, "A Call to Arms," in all respects irreproachable, and two quotations from newspapers.

Grasshoff, in a burlesque effort of imagination, describes all sorts of impressions and results produced in the country districts by the calling up of the Civic Guard. He goes so far as to write these odious words: "The surrender of arms ordered at the same time was nothing, therefore, but pure charlatanry;" and a little further on: "For the moment it was sufficient for the peasant to have arms and a hiding place." . . . §

And these are the writings which have formed public opinion in Germany!

Have they not gone so far as to garble declarations made by Belgians on the subject of the Civic Guard? After the burning of Gërimont the neighbouring landed proprietor, M. du Bus de Warnaffe, accused of being a chief of *francs-tireurs*, appeared before a court-martial, held at Ambly. They there acknowledged that the fire was the result of a mistake. A deposition that he made on the subject of the Civic Guard was afterwards published || with such alterations that he was obliged to protest strongly to the German authorities.

Grasshoff, who doubtless counts on the silence to which circumstances compel the Belgian people, has given us the following challenge:—

"This Civic Guard, that is to say all the men of twenty to forty years and the persons voluntarily

* *Belgiens Schuld*, p. 52. Reimer, Berlin, 1915.

† Herm. Frobenius, *Durch Not und Tod*. Freytag, Leipzig, p. 76.

‡ *Der Franktireur-Krieg in Belgien*, pp. 19 and 25. Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, Stuttgart, Berlin;

§ *Belgiens Schuld*, pp. 47 and 48.

|| *Belgiens Schuld*, p. 48. *Berliner Tageblatt*, 15th May, 1915, No. 245.

associated with them in the country districts and small towns, did they fire or did they not? Speak! An obstinate silence is the answer. We must content ourselves with that."*

No! We shall not keep silence! To the challenge made to us from whatever quarter, we fearlessly make this reply for our diocese: "Germany will never succeed in proving that—we do not merely say any organisation—but even that a certain number of individuals of the Civic Guard—or other civilians either—ever fired on the troops."

They also say that the *Belgian newspapers* of the early days of August have themselves recognised the existence of *francs-tireurs*, and they quote various extracts from the Press in support of this allegation.†

Though, to our knowledge, none of these quotations refer to localities in our diocese, we will say a few words about them.

No man of sincerity and good faith would be disturbed by certain quotations, rare and isolated, laboriously collected from the Press of the whole country, very clearly opposed to the general trend of the whole Belgian press and for the most part proving nothing.

In their desire to find us at fault, our enemies have collected the most unimportant quotations almost always from second-rate papers.

However regrettable these quotations may be, they ought not to surprise us beyond measure. In those days, when patriotic exaltation was so lively, when so much false and exaggerated news was hawked about, and favoured by the difficulty of communications, exact information was almost impossible in the newspapers. Besides, it was to *German sources* that rumours of this kind very often were to be traced. It is certain that in the beginning Belgians accepted in good faith similar news, and it is not astonishing if it finds an echo in a small number of Belgian newspapers.

But reports in the Press positively must not be accepted without check; there is need for verifying them in each particular case, and it is here that we await our accusers.‡

* * *

We see that it is by means of general affirmations that Germany seeks to establish the existence of *francs-tireurs*. Numerous German newspapers and a considerable literature work at this task without respite. It is doubtless supposed that constant repetition of this assertion will make the world believe it. But all these efforts break down before the impossibility of quoting actual facts and of proving them.

As for us, in the midst of the suffering caused us by the ruin of our diocese, nothing has given us greater comfort than the certainty that no inhabitant of our diocese is guilty, and that the German army has killed among us only innocent persons on the pretext of their being *francs-tireurs*.

In the diocese of Namur 25 priests and members of religious orders and thousands of civilians have been shot, often with unheard of refinements of cruelty. Yet the most guilty—and the number of them is *extraordinarily limited*—have not the least act of ill-will to the German troops charged against them. The Germans have simply found at their houses a gun or cartridges kept imprudently, sometimes an empty cartridge case, a plaything for a child! These are the most serious of the charges for which so many precious lives have been cut short!

Such excesses call for our most energetic reprobation. It is impossible, in fact, to stigmatize this unjustifiable abuse of power too strongly. Their authors would not be able to justify this violation of all laws of humanity by any military reason.

This is appreciated by numerous German officers who have limited themselves in punishing such acts of imprudence to ordinary penalties, such as fine, imprisonment, etc.

Who can be surprised that arms sometimes remained in houses, especially near the Luxemburg frontier, where the orders of the Belgian Government had scarcely had time to arrive at the moment of the invasion? Who could have suspected that the fact of possessing a gun was punishable by the capital penalty?

Note what the German army did with the arms deposited, even expensive sporting guns; the weapons were carried off, broken and thrown into the river by the troops, who had not, however, under the terms of the Hague Convention, any right of property in them, but only the right of putting them in a safe place.

* * *

We cannot repeat too often: notwithstanding the challenge addressed to her, *Germany cannot prove—we do not say any organisation—but even a certain number of cases, even isolated cases, of francs-tireurs.*

To this day we only know the names of three *francs-tireurs* given by the German authorities in the provinces of Namur and Luxemburg. These are three ecclesiastics, M. l'Abbé Laisse, parish priest of Spontin; M. l'Abbé Bilande, almoner of the deaf mutes at Bouge; and M. l'Abbé Pierret, curate of Étalle.

The late lamented parish priest of Spontin has been denounced as guilty in a letter of the Prussian Minister of War to the Imperial Chancellor, dated the 22nd of January. By a telegram of the 10th of April addressed to their Excellencies, the Governor-General and the Military Governor of Namur, we asserted his innocence. We are more and more able to prove it.

As far as concerns the other two victims, we are told that the Review, *Pax-Informationen* of Cologne, has published a communication from the Prussian Ministry of War to the effect that M. Bilande "was taken in the act of participating in the attack of civilians at Bouge against the troops and was shot," and M. Pierret "had shot wounded German soldiers, and for this act was hanged."§

* *Belgiens Schuld*, p. 79.

† *Belgiens Schuld*, p. 22. *Der Franktireur Krieg in Belgien*, Stuttg. and Berlin. *Kölnische Zeitung*, No. 424, 27th April, 1915.

‡ Note 118 (p. 1-14) of the Bureau Documentaire Belge, established at 52, Rue des Gobelins, Le Havre, contains a reply to the German pamphlet, entitled: *The Francs-tireurs War in Belgium. Confessions of the Belgian Press.* (*Der Franktireurkrieg in Belgien. Geständnisse der belgischen Presse.*) (Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry).

§ Each accuser has a different version. According to the author of *La Guerre Allemande et le Catholicisme*, the reason for the hanging was this: The victim had surreptitiously shot a non-commissioned officer; he carried a very sharp small sword, and 29 to 30 cavalry swords and bayonets and an infantry rifle were found at his house! (p. 88).

Even at Étalle, during the night of tragedy, yet another tale was told: "He was a French officer in disguise. He had killed three or four German soldiers!"

Thus truth emerges from the contradictory accusations themselves.

Knowing, after a personal detailed inquiry, the falsity of the charges made, and being able to prove beyond a doubt the innocence of the accused, we have begged the German authorities to let us know if the communication is authentic, and if so to make us acquainted with the proofs of guilt.

The Government of Namur has replied that " 'Etalle is not in its jurisdiction and that consequently this case cannot be considered ; so far as concerns Bouge, the Government is not in a position to give an opinion as to the accuracy of a communication coming from another source ; it is not responsible for the contents of *Pax-Informationen* ; that His Lordship is free to address himself to the editor of this publication."

A correspondence with Germany being then impossible, we insisted to His Excellency the Military Governor on the 26th of April in these terms :—

" Had the communication emanated only from *Pax-Informationen*, I should not have thought of questioning Your Excellency on this matter ; I am not ignorant that the Government could not be held responsible for the contents of a document of that sort. But actually, if one can believe the publication in question, the communication comes from the German authorities themselves—that is to say, from the Prussian Ministry of War.

" Your Excellency is undoubtedly in a position to inquire of this Ministry if the declarations attributed to it are authentic, yes or no, and, if the answer is in the affirmative, to secure a communication of the proofs of guilt which this Ministry possesses. I venture to insist on Your Excellency's having the kindness to obtain this information."

This letter received no reply.

Germany will continue to publish the names of the three *francs-tireurs* of Namur, but the world will not believe the charge.

In our opinion, the position of Germany in this serious matter has a parallel in the inextricable embarrassment of an imprudent man, stuck in the mire, who at every effort to get out sinks further in. The national pride of this country has prevented it from submitting the word of its soldiers to an inquiry during the course of the invasion ; it still prevents it from answering the call addressed to it to make an impartial inquiry to prove that civilians have fired.

Such a refusal is an avowal of its inability to make known the truth.

(c.)—*Official Attempt to Justify German Behaviour.*

After the individual efforts we have just exposed, Germany has intervened officially in the " White Book."

This is a volume of 328 pages in quarto, with the title : *The Civilian War waged in Belgium in defiance of International Law.*

It contains a general statement with four appendices.

In the main statement, after a memorandum embodying *conclusions*, 66 reports from chiefs of the troops are printed. Forty places in the diocese are mentioned therein.

The four appendices are devoted to Aerschot, Andenne, Dinant and Louvain.

The reports of officers on Andenne, to the number of four, make a total of seven pages ; for Dinant there are 87 reports, filling 112 pages.

We see that the diocese of Namur has an important place in this work.

(i.)—*General Considerations on the Probatory Value of the " White Book."*

Although representing a colossal effort, the " White Book " will be impotent to clear Germany of the stains she incurred in the diocese. For in our view this work bears its own refutation in itself, and so unfavourable will be the impression produced by it that it will become a proof of Germany's guilt.

The " White Book " is, first of all, *incomplete*. Beside the localities of the diocese mentioned in it, there are some hundreds more where the Germans committed cruelties and caused lamentable destruction without reason.

Some omissions seem intentional. For they relate to facts so serious, so well known, so public even, that one cannot be silent about them from ignorance or forgetfulness.

Let us mention some of these omissions.

There is not a word in the " White Book " of the horrible scenes at **Tamines**. In the square of this town about 600 men—we say quite 600—of whom not one had been accused of the slightest wrong, without previous warning were subjected to the fire of a platoon ! Two hundred survivors of this fire, of whom a great number are sufferers therefrom, will one day tell in detail the monstrous scenes which took place in this village on the 22nd and 23rd of August, scenes, the horror of which passes all probability !

There is not a word in the " White Book " about **Surice**, where, under the traditional pretext that " a girl has tried to kill one of our officers," they, in the presence of mothers, wives and children, killed by rifle fire and finished off with revolvers, the best men of the district, among them five venerable ecclesiastics, several aspirants to the priesthood, some well known people, all peaceable folk whose only crime was to await the German troops with quiet confidence.

There is not in the " White Book " one word about **Spontin**, where the instinct of destruction respected nothing, and where a variety of ingenious cruelties were inflicted on many groups of civilians, of whom a great number were killed or shot, without a single one having been convicted of any fault whatsoever.

There is not in the " White Book " one word about **Namur**, where we ourselves witnessed the hasty cutting off of life, desolating destruction of monuments and buildings, systematic terrorisation of the population, and where we ourselves were threatened with death for the pretended misdeeds of the *francs-tireurs*.

There is not in the " White Book " one word about **Ethe**, where under the renewed pretext of an attempt by a girl, the soldiers killed 200 civilians, also killed French soldiers, prisoners and wounded, killed French ambulance attendants and Belgian civilians of the Red Cross, perpetrated a horrible sacrilege, and inflicted all sorts of physical and moral tortures on the inhabitants, now ruined and without shelter.

There is not a word in the "White Book" about **Gomery**, where the civilians, chased from their burning houses, saw for themselves the poor French wounded executed in successive parties.

There is not a word in the "White Book" about **Latour**, where all the men of the hamlet, to the number of 71, including two priests, were killed at the moment when they were on their way to bury the dead, by the orders of the German army.

In the "White Book" there is not a word about *Aische-en-Refail, Alle, Arsimont, Avelais, Boninne, Bourseigne-Neuve, Bouge, Daussois, Dourbes, Ermeton-sur-Biert, Evrehailles, Felenne, Fosses, Franchimont, Franc-Waret, Frasnès, Gedinne, Gelbressée, Hanzinelle, Hanzinne, Hautbois, Hastière, Hermeton-sur-Meuse, Hingeon, Houdrémont, Jemeppe-sur-Sambre, Lisogne, Louette-Saint-Pierre, Mariembourg, Mettet, Monceau, Morville, Onhay, Oret, Petigny, Romedenne, Somme-Leuze, Stave, Temploux, Villers-en-Fagne, Wartet, Waulsort, Willersée, Yvoir, Anloy, Assenois, Glaumont, Baranzy, Bertrix, Briscol, Étalle, Framont, Frénes-Opont, Freylange, Glaireuse, Hamipré, Herbeumont, Izel, Jehonville, Maissin, Manhay, Musson, Mussy-la-Ville, Neufchâteau, Pin, St. Léger, etc.*

The Germans have tried in the "White Book" to justify certain actions. Why have they recoiled from an attempt to justify the numerous excesses committed in the localities named above?

But even this is not the limit of the omissions in the "White Book." Of what does it consist with regard to the places mentioned in it? Puerile accusations against the Belgians, silence as to the most serious acts of the German army.

Why then a "White Book" if it is not to justify Germany from imputations made against her?

The "White Book" has no *probatory value*. Evidently, its deductions should rest only on *facts and proofs*. Yet—a thing *hardly credible*—the hundred of reports which follow one another in it, making a tedious whole, depressing to read, contain, so to say, no single precise fact which can be checked even by those who have a profound knowledge of the places; they are always vague and general assertions.

Thus, in the appendix concerning Dinant, we find repeated *nearly three hundred times* in the same terms or equivalent words: "They fired on us!" The most serious accusations are thus founded on a single affirmation. Such, for example, is the only proof by which it is established that at Dinant men fired from the cathedral, that there was a question of a plan of revolt conceived in advance, that all weapons were used in the resistance, military rifles and sporting rifles, bullets and shot, revolvers, knives and stones; that priests, women, old men and children joined in the attack; that they continued to shoot from cellars on fire; that a *franc-tireur*, on the point of being executed, fired his revolver at the platoon of execution; that some *francs-tireurs* had assumed female clothes; that others had misused the Geneva Cross, and under its protection fought against the Germans; that even the wounded and ambulance men had been fired at from houses; that the population had killed sleeping soldiers, mutilated those who had fallen, burned the wounded prisoners whom they had bound to stakes, etc.

One does not know how to express all at once the puerility and injustice of grounding such a romance on simple affirmations, sometimes even on a single one. A Government accepts without discussion the stories—we were going to say the dreams—of soldiers, written in the trenches some months after the event, not one of which has been submitted to bilateral examination. All this has become Gospel truth! When we ask for names, places, dates, we receive the answer: "You cannot doubt it; it is the statement of a German soldier!"

But what evidential value can one recognise in reports limited to repeating general assertions without exact detail, without any indication of persons or places, without any proof other than vague testimony?

Moreover, *what value can one attribute to such evidence?* One must not forget that the depositions are made by the guilty, or at best by accused persons, who expect without doubt to have to answer for their actions, if not to the justice of their country, at least to humanity.

Also the obvious intention of excusing, rather than of giving evidence of, facts appears throughout these pages.

Therefore we say to German justice: "You incur a heavy responsibility to the honour of your nation by covering the acts of your army, which we denounce to you as criminal, in a silence signifying approval."

If we only listened to our own innermost feeling, we should confine ourselves to exclaiming: "Lie; Imposture!"

But the dignity and honour of our attacked country demands a more serious effort.

We shall be long, for we wish to answer the enemy who defames us point by point. Some mistaken or inexact detail may perhaps have slipped into this reply in spite of all our care; we declare ourselves ready to accept all just corrections. To bring the light and establish the facts is our only desire.

A chapter will deal with the *secondary places* of the diocese mentioned in the "White Book."

Another chapter will be devoted to *Andenne*.

A last chapter to *Dinant*.

ii.—Secondary Places in the Diocese.

At **Thibessart**, writes Lieutenant von Lindeiner,* we found cartridges in the house of Bienvelert† the forester. "As they told me," he adds, "our patrols had been fired at in the forest."

This is all the "White Book" says. It dares not draw any conclusion as to the guilt, and keeps silence as to the punishment.

For the mere fact of some forgotten cartridges three persons of proved honesty were shot at Thibessart, namely, the forester Bieuveler, his son Joseph, a pupil at Carlsbourg, aged 19 years, and Nicolas Lebœuf.

These were shot in spite of protestations of innocence and the supplications of the parish priest. Such a deed will be severely condemned by every civilised man.

It is asserted that at **Biesme**, on the 24th of August, "a side street was barred by about a dozen armed civilians; these were killed and some houses were burnt."‡

A single detail will establish the incorrectness of this report: Eight persons only were shot at Biesme at different places and different times. On the 24th of August there were three victims, and

* Appendix 25.

† This spelling, given in the "White Book," is incorrect.

‡ Appendix 34.

not the slightest complaint could be made against them. All this shows how far the burning of about 30 houses was legitimate !

Dr. Kiefman, Staff Surgeon-in-chief, reports that Dr. Beyer and Sergeant-Major Steffen had learnt from Lieutenant Eric Koch that the last-named, wounded near *Pocheresse*, had been stripped of his clothes by the civil population of **Graide**, robbed, and thrown into a pool of liquid manure.*

We have made an inquiry into this fact, and we give a formal denial to the assertions of the "White Book."

Lieutenant Koch has a lively imagination. To the parish priest of Graide who took care of him he had told another story, namely, that "A civilian bullet had hit him in the lower abdomen, a woman had wounded him with a pitchfork, and he had killed her with his revolver."

They did not believe this story at Graide, because the wounded man had no marks of a pitchfork and no woman had been killed or wounded at *Pocheresse*.

Can one believe any more in the history of the manure pool ? Can we suppose that civilians, terrified and as it were drowned in this frightful invasion, could have been able or could have dared to commit this savage act, that they were not caught and punished, that nothing was done to discover the guilty, that the fact was not even mentioned at the time of the events ?

It is stated that at **Nothomb**† the army collected Menier rifles, recently greased, with their cartridges in packages, as if they had just been received from a *dépôt* ; these were the arms distributed by the authorities with a view to a war of *francs-tireurs*.

There is not a detail here which is not false and which does not call for direct denial. The arms collected at Nothomb were the Albini of six or seven Custom House officers, a small number of sporting guns belonging to private individuals, and some arms so old that they had been allowed to be kept at home by virtue of a written authority given by Oberstleutnant Count Keller.

At **Rulles**,‡ "In the night of 23rd to 24th August, the baggage column was fired at."

This charge appears in the "White Book" for the first time. There was no question of it at the time of the passage of the troops.

The burning of 28 houses, the moral tortures inflicted during a fortnight on the civil population, are justified as a punishment for the pretended misdeeds.

These reprisals assuredly were unjustifiable, for at Rulles, no more than anywhere else, not a single shot was fired at the Germans. These were at the village for two weeks and were well received there. All arms had been deposited before the 17th of August.

Possibly some French soldiers, separated from their regiments after the battle of the 22nd, may have fired ; if they did, is there anything astonishing or reprehensible in this ? What is serious is to hold the civil population responsible.

The facts about Rosière, Bovigny and Gouvvy have a special interest. These frontier towns were the first halting places of the troops ; what they showed themselves to be there, they continued to be hereafter.

Of **Rosière-la-Grande** § we have only a word to say. If Colonel von Wentzky, who has linked his name with the destruction of this pretty village, had taken the trouble to order a short inquiry, he would have learnt that the pretended signal given to the *francs-tireurs* of this peaceable place *was given by one of his own soldiers*. The house is known from which a German, in a state of drunkenness, fired the first shots, to which the sentinels in the neighbourhood replied, and which brought about the general firing.

And this was the cause of a series of monstrous acts—of which the "White Book" naturally says not a word, any more, indeed, than it mentions the burning of the place.

Five civilians were seized and killed without trial, the three brothers Léon, Lucien and Ernest Remience, Joseph Laloy and Désiré Coleaux. All the circumstances of the execution are known, and it will hardly be maintained that they were *francs-tireurs* !

Civilians were shut up in their houses, which were set on fire. They would have remained in the flames had not the night allowed them to fly stealthily, and so avoid the fury of the soldiers who wanted to burn them alive.

Forty-two civilians, in spite of the supplication of the distinguished person who guaranteed their innocence, were carried off on the Bastogne road. At the crossing of the Morhet road the soldiers called for "le maire" (meaning the burgomaster). Amongst the prisoners was Alexandre Lemaire. In consequence of this unhappy confusion, this most estimable man was placed against a tree and shot.¶ Then the Germans stripped their clothes from 42 other civilians and drove them into the forest, threatening to shoot them !

"In the district of **Bovigny**," if we are to believe the "White Book," "civilians shot at an officer on the night of the 8th and 9th of August, whilst he was going to give the alarm at Viel-Salm."¶¶

The officer gives no proof at all of his accusation.

As a fact, during this night, the commune was in a state of complete calm. There was no shooting nor report of any shooting ; the local authorities were neither questioned nor disturbed.

It may be interesting to recall that, some days later, a civilian of Houvelez, in the commune of Bovigny, was arrested on the same charge of having fired at the troops. Happily he was able to prove his innocence. The guilty man was a German soldier ; he had been taken in the act ; they found the empty cartridge case, and on seeing this the captain pronounced the acquittal.

On the same charge a civilian of Cierreux, another part of the commune, was torn from his home and dragged away by the troops. They already spoke of burning the village. Happily a flash of good sense and justice put an end to what might be called a sinister comedy. His innocence was acknowledged and he was released.

* Appendix 62.

† Appendix 18.

‡ *Ibid.*

§ Appendices 11 and 12.

¶ At Salm-Château the German military authorities were persuaded with great difficulty that the name of Lemaire was a very common family name in the district.

¶¶ Appendix 13.

The report concerning **Gouvy** is fantastic and full of mistakes.* It wickedly insinuates that the parish priest, the station-master, and the population concealed projects seriously hostile to the Germans under a friendly appearance; the 300 Brownings and the 50 kilos of dynamite found in the place were without doubt destined to arm the *francs-tireurs* of Gouvy!

The credulous and suspicious officer was completely mistaken. If he had not burnt the records of the railway and custom house, he would have found there evident proof that the arms were *in transit* to a neighbouring neutral country. The least inquiry would also have revealed that the explosives were destined for the work of excavation in progress in the neighbourhood of the station. The long sufferings inflicted on the station-master would thus have been avoided.

Why did not the report add that a civilian at Gouvy was also accused of firing, and that he was carried off to Germany, though he was innocent, as has since been recognised?

Deiffelt, a neighbouring village, was also accused of having fired at the Germans, and the lives of the inhabitants were threatened. At the instance of the parish priest, a conscientious officer opened an inquiry. This revealed, as is attested by written evidence, that the shot was fired by a German.

The entire Press and literature of Germany—the Catholic writers above all—perpetually quote **Champion** and **Jamoigne** as evident proofs of the participation of Belgian religious houses in the war of *francs-tireurs*.

At **Champion** † in the chaplain's house 40 cases of dynamite and 30 boxes of rifle cartridges are said to have been found! The German gunner was obliged to render the dynamite inexplorable!

At **Jamoigne** ‡ the inhabitants are said to have fired on the troops from the tower of the convent?

Upon what do the accusations relating to **Champion** rest? On the evidence of Sergeant Ebers, Sergeant-Major Schulze, and some grenadiers. It fills two pages of the "White Book."

If in place of accepting these accusations without checking them, the General had ordered an inquiry he would have discovered that the pretended cases of dynamite were only cases *for* dynamite, which the Belgian engineers had left in the open air against the front of the chaplain's house where they had established an office. These cases had been handled by the Germans as early as Sunday; and it was not till Tuesday that they made a stir about them during the course of the firing!

As to the boxes of cartridges, they too had been left by the Belgian army, not in this house, but in a house far away.

At **Champion** many dishonourable actions were committed by the invader. For the moment we will confine ourselves to pointing out how sad it is to see the German authorities repaying establishments like that of **Champion**, which have devoted themselves to the wounded and the army, with such base suspicions.§

The events at **Jamoigne** began with a coarse comedy of soldiers and officers whom fear rendered vicious. They cried out: "They have fired from the tower of the convent! They have fired on us!" A Catholic chaplain reproached the Mother Superior of the Nuns of Providence: "You have arms," cried he, pointing to the guns of the wounded soldiers in the hospital!

And during this time the Germans opened a general fire of musketry, firing over the heads of the good nuns, whom they kept during nearly two hours kneeling in the hot sun. At the convent a soldier mounted the tower, and there fired shots as if he were killing a *franc-tireur*.

In reality at **Jamoigne** there were no shots fired but by Germans. They were seen firing on the 24th of August, about 2 o'clock, before the burning of the village, and crouched against the gables of the *Hôtel Detroux*. "If civilians fired at you," said the parish priest of the place in the thick of the firing, "where are your dead, where are your wounded?"

Who could have fired? The village was almost empty. There was not a soul in the houses near the hospital. And four only of the houses burnt were occupied, one by the two unfortunates who were shot, and the three others only by women, one of whom was killed and another wounded.

Besides, an Oberstleutnant declared at **Jamoigne**, on the 26th of August, "that the General regretted what had happened; that they knew perfectly well that the inhabitants had not fired, and that the soldiers occasionally discharged an unlucky shot which alarmed the men unnerved by the battle."

It is absolutely proved that Jean-Baptist Constant and his son, Lambert Constant, the two persons mentioned in the report, had never touched a gun and were innocent victims. Their execution, the burning of the village, the moral tortures inflicted on the inhabitants, as also the unworthy treatment suffered by the parish priest and by various ecclesiastics and civilians of the parish from the 16th to the 19th of August are crimes from which Germany will try in vain to clear herself.

Finally, the "White Book" does not hesitate to accuse the doctor and Sisters of the hospital of having failed in their duty to the wounded. Already during the course of these events the Belgian doctor, who had by himself attended to nearly 400 wounded in two days, found himself blamed for "having come, revolver in hand, to the German wounded, and having put them in the cellars." We protest against these calumnious accusations, and we pay homage to the charity and devotion of which the whole staff of this hospital have given proof.

At **Silenrieux**,|| writes the "White Book," "At least 30 or 40 shots were fired from the belfry of the church on the troops. It is impossible that this could have been done without the knowledge of the parish priest, and the attack seemed to have been premeditated."

Here are the facts: On the 26th, towards evening, after having marched past peaceably for nearly two days, the Germans fired the village after a frantic fusillade, of which the first shots—as witnesses attest—were fired by an officer. Not a shot was fired by a civilian.

To say, then, that shots were fired from the belfry or that an attack was premeditated is false. Had there been a struggle between soldiers and inhabitants some one would have suffered; but *not a single civilian was shot!*

* Appendix 13.

† Appendices 36, 37.

‡ Appendices 29, 30.

§ To the serious accusations of the "White Book" it is interesting to oppose the eulogistic appreciation of the Convent of **Champion**, expressed by the Germans (*Köln. Volkszeitung*, 7th January, 1915, No. 17).

|| Appendices 39 and 40.

The Belgians are continually accused without the least foundation of having fired from the church towers. This accusation is the more surprising, in that the German army is in the habit of violating the Hague Convention on this point without scruple. It still keeps observation posts on some of our religious buildings. To our legitimate protests in reference to the tower at Spy, the answer was "that the general situation did not lead them to expect fighting round Spy; if, however, fighting occurred, military interests must everywhere take the first place. No one can foresee to-day if and to what point Spy and its church would have to suffer therefrom."

They could not avow more clearly that they care nothing for the law of nations and international conventions.

The accusations according to which "Civilians fired from the tops of belfries," fall to the ground one after another. At **Les Bulles** the parish priest was accused of firing from the tower, doubtless to justify the burning of the church. He was said to have been shot for this reason. The statement, however, was inaccurate. The commander of the 63rd Infantry has himself denied it in writing.*

Tintigny and its division of **Ansart** have the honour of a dozen references in the "White Book." None of them mention actual facts or facts of any importance, so we shall refrain from noticing them.

It is difficult to express our indignation concerning the work done by the German troops in this village. **Tintigny**, **Ansart**, **Breuvanne** and **Poncelle** have been reduced to ashes with a ferocity hitherto unsurpassed. There have been a hundred victims, including the parish priest, the burgomaster, many leading men, and the flower of youth. Not the slightest charge was brought against the inhabitants. Their only guilt was that the French troops were in the neighbourhood.

According to the "White Book," at **Rossignol** a civilian fired at a soldier, and wounded him with shot;† shots were fired at the water-carriers and civilians were made prisoners;‡ finally Commandant **Sternberg** found a German with a burnt head, and some metres off a bottle half full of petrol and another of benzine. It was evident from this that the inhabitants had dragged the wounded man into the house, poured the petrol and benzine over his head, and afterwards set fire to him."§

To base accusations upon such doubtful and inaccurate materials we consider an unworthy proceeding.

If they were true, would they justify the horrible acts of which **Rossignol** was the scene and concerning which the "White Book" remains carefully silent? We shall quote only two of them.

All the men had been lodged in the church. Two days after they were taken out. They arrived at **Arlon** exhausted by privations and fatigue, and there *all the men were shot*, from lads of 15 years to old men of 83! This little village, now only a ruin, has scarcely a man left! They mourn there for 108 victims!

John Baptist Goffinet, an alderman of the commune, as honourable as meritorious, was charged with the work of gravedigger on the 26th of August. He was met by Uhlans. In vain he showed them the armlet of the Red Cross; shots laid him low. And some time later other cavalymen detached the armlet from the corpse and took away this damning piece of evidence which denounced too glaringly this criminal violation of the laws of war.

At **Sorinne** the whole population had been conducted on Saturday, the 22nd, to the church of **Leignon**. Only some old women, guarded by the soldiers, remained in the village.

This does not prevent the "White Book" from affirming that "on the 23rd of August the inhabitants, who had kept quiet all the afternoon, attacked the troops surreptitiously at nightfall."|| A second report, speaking of the same incident and the same day, says that during "the day the inhabitants did not show themselves; on the contrary, the village appeared wholly abandoned; but at the fall of night they fired."¶

It is affirmed, then, several times, that the inhabitants of **Sorinne** fired on the 23rd of August. Yet at this moment they were, all of them, men, women and children, in a neighbouring village since the day before. Seldom was a lie so manifest. They dare also to write "that on the 23rd of August the château-hospital of **Sorinne** was attacked by the inhabitants, who fired on it; but they were successfully repulsed."** Yet at the **Château** of **Sorinne** one pane of glass only was broken, and that not by a shot.

At **Bièvre**, according to the "White Book," on the 23rd of August, "the inhabitants, after having given water to the horses, fired from their houses on the squadrons. A Cuirassier was killed, an infantryman was wounded."††

Another accusation had been formulated against **Bièvre**, at the time of the invasion. At the time when the hostages were in the church, it was maintained that they had been *seen and recognised* finishing off the wounded. How is this contradiction explained?

Meanwhile we answer the accusation of the "White Book."

It is false that shots were fired from even a single house. All the arms had been carefully collected before the arrival of the troops. A fresh search made by the German authorities *failed to discover a single weapon*. The accusation brought against the civilians of **Bièvre** falls, therefore, to pieces of itself.

Let us next re-establish the true facts. At the end of the battle of the 23rd of August, when the French troops were repulsed, the Germans reached **Bièvre**. With no other motive than a savage fury, provoked by the French resistance, they at once set fire to the four corners of the village. They gave themselves up to acts of cruelty against a number of civilians without even respecting the women and children, and they submitted the rest of this peaceable population to unheard-of moral tortures, which one cannot sufficiently deplore and denounce.

In connection with **Behême** mention is made in the "White Book" of a "communication of the 8th of August, in which the chief forester wrote to the burgomaster that the gendarmes and the foresters had been asked to organise the inhabitants for armed resistance."‡‡ We defy the German authorities to produce this document. And so long as we are not in possession of the text any further reply is unnecessary.

* *Der Fels*, December, 1914, p. 106.

† Appendix 23.

‡ Appendix 28.

§ Appendix 61.

|| Appendix 36.

¶ *Ibid.*

** Appendix 4 of Dinant.

†† Appendix 12.

‡‡ Appendix 52.

The "White Book" adds that: "on the 9th of August, when a German patrol was retiring in the direction of Behême it was shot at by the inhabitants of this place."*

To record such an accusation in the "White Book" was a remarkable piece of audacity. In fact, it is notorious that the shots were fired by three French soldiers hidden behind a hedge. The German patrol was not ignorant of this, because, the inhabitants of Behême showed them the empty cartridge cases which were certainly French; the soldiers were undoubtedly convinced of this since they neither punished the inhabitants nor fired the village.

At **Léglise**, says the "White Book," "on the 22nd of August two civilians of Anlier, who had been surprised with arms in their hands, were handed over to the troops. The company had several times been fired at by civilians."†

They insinuate, therefore, that the two civilians in question were of the number of those who had fired and that they were justly condemned.

We reply: the incident in question happened at **Léglise**, not on the 22nd, but on the day before; in our opinion it is one of the most regrettable incidents that has occurred during the war; it resulted in the death of two civilians in heartrending circumstances.

The population of Anlier can bear witness that **Emile Dumont**, a peaceable old man of 70 years of age, the first victim, was brutally apprehended by the soldiers in the full view of the village, whilst he was going openly to deliver up his arms; he was arrested on this ground alone as carrying arms and was dragged to Anlier and shot. He paid, therefore, with his life for his obedience to the order given by the German authority itself to deposit the arms!

Alfred Jacob, a young man of 30 years, whose only fault was being found near this scene, was seized with the other, condemned on the same charge, and shot.

These are the unfortunate victims that **Commandant Illgner** had executed at **Léglise**! He paid no heed to their supplications nor to those of the communal authorities, who affirmed the correctness of the facts and the innocence of the accused.

"The company," it is stated, "had several times been fired at by civilians about this time." This statement calls for a most direct denial. Is it a question of shots fired at **Anlier** or **Léglise**? At **Anlier**, it is true that the troops, who showed themselves to be very savage, accused the civilians of having fired; but they only made a general assertion without being able to produce a single actual fact, except that which we refer to elsewhere at **Behême**, which is a part of this commune. As to the village of **Léglise** it is quite true that two or three shots were fired on the 20th of August, about 9 o'clock in the evening; but we know the exact spot from which they were fired and that they were certainly fired by German soldiers. So little were they set down to civilians that neither the population nor the authorities were put to any trouble on account of them. It is sufficient to note the very eulogistic certificates awarded to the inhabitants for their reception.

"At **Laneffe** and at **Somzee** the column underwent a lively fusillade on the 25th of August. A certain number of civilians were shot and some houses burnt."‡

Here again the story is flagrantly incorrect. Neither at **Laneffe** nor at **Somzée** was a single inhabitant shot!

It is true that the troops shot three civilians near **Tarciennes**, in the district of **Somzée**: a venerable ecclesiastic nearly 70 years old, **M. Druet**, parish priest of **Acoz**, and his two companions; but these last could not have fired on the troops at **Somzée** or **Laneffe**, for they were brought from **Acoz**. The numerous houses burnt were burnt in the pure rage of destruction. No act of bad faith had been committed by the inhabitants, who, moreover, had fled.

A non-commissioned officer sent to **Les Bulles** on the 23rd of August was pursued by gun-fire at the entrance of the village. Immediately the burning of the place was ordered, and was partly carried out§.

So the "White Book" declares.

Yet nothing happened at **Les Bulles** on the 23rd of August. The burning of the vast and beautiful church, the destruction of 34 houses, the shooting of several civilians took place on the 24th of August.

Whilst committing these regrettable actions the soldiers said "that civilians had fired on them;" yet they did not attempt to prove the guilt of a single inhabitant. The population never ceased to be irreproachable.

At **Frenois** on the 23rd of August civilians are also said to have fired at the troops||.

If this was true, how was it that they did not find the guilty persons, and that not one inhabitant was arrested? A civilian was killed there, caught in the frantic fire directed against the houses.

The truth is that the terrified people of the hamlet opened wide their doors and windows to give everything to the soldiers and horses. And at this same hour they were rewarded by the burning of their houses.

But **Les Bulles** and **Frenois** were on the 23rd in the line of fire; yet, once again, even if some French soldier fired, is it not contrary to all humanity to wreak vengeance on innocent civilians?

At **Villers-devant-Orval**¶ it is stated, "the troops were at first received in a friendly manner by the inhabitants, who gave them fruit and provisions; then suddenly they fired on the soldiers from behind."

The case of **Villers-devant-Orval** has been often quoted in the German press and literature as an instance of the supposed war of *francs-tireurs*; it reproduces the classic version, which the German army and nation has artlessly accepted by suggestion and which is found on nearly every page of the "White Book": *Kindly reception; then shots fired from behind.***

* *Ibid.*

† Appendix 18.

‡ Appendix 34.

§ Appendices 23 and 28.

|| Appendix 28.

¶ Appendices 18 and 19.

** See **Rosière**, **Bièvre**, **Gouvry**, **Leffe**, **Hollogne**, **Aye**, **Marche**, **Sorinne**, **St. Vincent**, **Ste. Marie**, **Rosignol**, **Jamoigne**, **Ychippe**, **Silenrieux**, **Florenville**, **Andenne**, **Dinant**. [Another stereotyped phrase is the firing of a shot or the ringing of a bell as a signal for the attack of *francs-tireurs*. See **Andenne**, **St. Vincent**, **Rosière**, **Anthée**, **Rosée**, **Silenrieux**.

This story is a colossal invention. No attempt has been made to verify it. Its baselessness and falsity Germans of good faith will one day have to recognise.

In any case, they will find it difficult to justify themselves for Villers-devant-Orval. There the soldiers killed two women and burned a house in spite of a certificate of protection which the military authority had specially given in order that the place might be spared. And on the 26th of August when some notables made a complaint of what had happened, the superior officer contented himself with replying: "Our men had been drinking!"

"At Villers-devant-Orval," says the "White Book," "the houses from which shots had been fired were burnt." Yet only a single house was burnt in this village, a house deserted and shut up for a year, which not a single person had entered.

"At **Couvin**,* on the afternoon of the 26th of August, the column was fired at from a house on the right of the line of march. On searching the house three civilians, who bore arms and cartridges, were the only persons found."

These three civilians were doubtless the three victims killed at Couvin by the German troops, that is to say, an old man of 71 years, who was gathering wood; the gardener of the Château d'Ermeton, whom an officer knocked over with three revolver shots at the convent of St. Roch; finally, an ecclesiastic, the curate of the parish, the Abbé Paul Gilles, Doctor of the University of Rome, a man as gentle and inoffensive as he was distinguished. If one examines the heartrending circumstances of their deaths one finds that they were not caused by any act of war.

At **Houdemont** they have thought well to record the short scene of the night of the 23rd and 24th of August. One detail, however, is inexact: the Germans burned, not several, but one single house.†

Not a word of the bloody tragedy of the following day, which will remain one of the standard examples of the complete destruction of a village and the martyrdom of peaceful civilians by the Germans.

"At **Chiny**‡ an inhabitant informed the Commandant von Manstein that on the 9th of August the Civic Guards had taught the inhabitants the handling of arms in order that they might defend the village; they would now be quite prepared to carry on the popular war."

We strongly protest against the designs ascribed to the Civic Guard of Chiny, against the part they are represented as playing. We regret that the "White Book" has omitted to name the inhabitant referred to in the accusation. Without doubt his declarations have been misrepresented or misunderstood.

All the "White Book" knows of **Anthee** is that "shots were fired on the 25th from houses and from a wood."§ Yet the village was on the 25th empty except for some old men and a group of priests and civilians made prisoners in the neighbourhood. These were witnesses of the systematic and deliberate burning of this beautiful village, and will one day be able to relate all the details of this savage and useless destruction.

It is said that at **Ychippe**,|| on the 22nd of August at 9 o'clock in the evening, civilians fired from behind a hedge. A shot hit the window of Colonel Hübner. This officer took hostages, had them bound, and threatened them if there was any more firing to put them in the middle of the road. It was on the intervention of the wives of the hostages that the fire of the *francs-tireurs* ceased. A patrol had been sent against the enemy who under cover of night had escaped in the direction of Corbion.

This statement, full of mistakes, misrepresents entirely the insignificant events which happened at Ychippe. It is true that shots were fired, but the German soldiers know that they were fired by their comrades. The officer Hübner said himself to the hostages, when he took them, that it was "a formality of war"; on leaving, the troops, with one accord, thanked the villagers "for their kind hospitality," and the stranger who has the curiosity to visit the quarters of the commandant will find no trace of a shot in the window.

At **Conneux**¶ two cyclists, summoned to repair a telephone wire, were shot at from a neighbouring wood. Eight to ten civilians who had broken the wire and fired fled at full speed; a detachment of infantry pursued them without being able to catch them.

In this statement there is not a word of truth. A notice concerning the breaking of wires had been freely placarded; an officer had even threatened the commune with a colossal fine in case of offence. But there had been no incident of the kind; not the least accusation had been brought against the population. The houses situated in the neighbourhood of the place where, according to the story, the wire was broken, were not damaged. The hostages had appeared before the military court, the day before, because a little gun cotton and arsenic had been found in the houses. They would certainly have been summoned for the much more serious fact of the breaking of a wire. That they were not summoned is a proof that nothing abnormal happened.

Why did not the "White Book" relate the scene of the day before rather than forge an untrue accusation?

In this same village shots rang out; the soldiers arrested civilians and accused them "of having fired on us." Later they learned that the soldiers had been shooting rabbits and the officers pheasants; some birds appeared at noon on the table of the Headquarters Staff. And that was the occurrence which exposed the village to being burnt and civilians to being shot!

Some other localities are also mentioned in the "White Book," namely, **Aye, Evelette, Florenville, Hollogne, Le Roux, Leuze, Marche, Sainte-Marie, Saint-Vincent**.

No actual fact or anything interesting to note is specified in respect of any of them; nothing but generalities, sometimes insignificant or even childish details.

We could also have dealt with these accusations one by one as we have done for the others and reduced them to nothing. We shall do so, one day, if necessary. Meanwhile we affirm categorically that *in none of these places has the population deserved the treatment or the accusations it has suffered.* •

* Appendix 42.

† Appendix 18.

‡ Appendix 52.

§ Appendix 38.

|| Appendix 31.

¶ Appendix 35.

For the rest, we exhort the German authorities to study carefully the history of these places, for the troops there gave themselves up to actions much more deplorable than those recorded in the "White Book."

iii.—Andenne.

The events at Andenne have made the round of the German press. The exploits of the troops there have been represented as one of the most severe and legitimate acts of repression of "the war of *francs-tireurs*."

Never perhaps has imagination had a freer scope! We may affirm that it has here reached the height of extravagance!

According to one of these stories,* on the 20th of August towards 6 o'clock in the evening, at the moment when the crossing of the Meuse had begun, the parish priest made a complete round of the town with a bell to give the signal for attack. Immediately a violent street fight began. A battery which was just going to enter the town set fire to it by a bombardment.

The same story relates the scene of the night in the following manner: The troops approached the town, marching past houses with wells in front. Suddenly the word of command was given. "Do not drink the water of the wells! The wells are poisoned!" Then a fresh word of command. "Revolvers out! Look out for *francs-tireurs*!" At 11 o'clock at night the troops arrived on the height, and beheld the prodigious and horrible sight of the town on fire at all its extremities. They then debouched upon an open space. "Suddenly," so says the narrator, "a hard object fell under my horse and a terrible cracking was heard. Flames arose, crackling to right and left of my horse, which fell and covered me partially under it. The explosion of this bomb was evidently the agreed signal for the beginning of the fight. For thereupon from all the houses of the square a deafening fusillade was directed upon the vehicles of the column, which followed close on one another, the horses galloping to escape the danger. They fired from all the windows, the ventilators and the attic windows of the house-tops; they fired from balconies, from loopholes, from half opened doors. To right and left bombs burst. Then the doors of the houses were broken down. A hellish uproar, so great that one could not hear one's self speak, arose in the narrow street. As it was possible that the troops might have fired on one another in the darkness and narrow space, the order was given to cease firing. But the fire of the *francs-tireurs* continued with the same violence. . . . When, at break of day, the thick mists rose from the Meuse, one saw the houses of the town in which the street fight had raged enveloped in flames. At the same time from the other side of the river the short but terrible crackling of salvoes resounded; the punishment of Andennes followed its course!"

This is the picture of the ruins—exaggerated to absurdity—which the *Düsseldorfer Tageblatt* gives:—†

"The most terrible sight of all the journey was presented to me at the town of Andenne, which is now completely razed to the ground. This large town, situated on the two banks of the Meuse, has been so sacked that only heaps of ruins bear evidence to its former existence.

"To judge from the freestone façades, the monuments, the remains of stately buildings, Andenne must have been a beautiful and prosperous town, with broad streets, magnificent public squares and elegant buildings. But our artillery has destroyed it all, because the inhabitants assassinated nearly all the soldiers of a battalion of riflemen on their march through. Terrible but well merited reprisals were inflicted. A whole large town was entirely destroyed. If they should ever design to rebuild it, it would take years to remove the ruins. A singular contrast appeared in this place of horror between the ruins and the flower gardens of the public squares. The marvellous cathedral is the only building still standing; it was spared by our gunners; only one of its towers was destroyed by a stray bomb."

Andenne has also had its *post-card* composed with the same care for truth. An imaginary view, taken at we know not what Belgian town, is accompanied by the classic inscription: "Andenne, in the valley of the Meuse, has been in great part destroyed, because, after the peaceful capitulation of the town and a residence there of some days, our troops were suddenly attacked from all sides by the fire of the inhabitants."‡

In view of the importance given to the events of Andenne by the German press, we can only be astonished at the small space assigned to them in the "White Book." And when one peruses these few tame pages, which, however, equal in imagination, if they do not surpass, the preceding narratives, when one reads the details which make one smile, and when one weighs the flimsiness of the accusations and the total absence of proof, one reflects spontaneously: "It is because *the case is bad*."

* * *

According to the "White Book" events can be summarised in the following manner: 1. Bell-ringing which gave the signal for the popular rising. 2. Violent street fighting; the inhabitants not only fired from cellars, from storeys and from loopholes contrived in the roofs, but they used grenades and hand-bombs, made use of machine-guns and poured boiling water. "If our losses were nevertheless small," says the general, "it was because the *francs-tireurs* fired very badly." 3. The attack was premeditated. The "White Book" has proof of it. Private Hugo Roleff learned from the German families of Andenne who tended him in the field hospital, that the clergy had given notice of all the preparations for it from the pulpit! And Major-General von Langermann asserts that according to what he had learnt later, a document which established the fact had been found at the house of the chief magistrate.

* *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 8th September, 1914.

† *Düsseldorfer Tageblatt*, 26th October, 1914.

‡ *Schaar and Dathe*, Treves. See the *Düsseldorfer General-Anzeiger*, 10th September, 1914.

It is superfluous to add that none of the facts *have any foundation*. They dare not even *attempt to prove them*. As we shall see further on, the members of the Commission did not say one word on the subject of them. They travelled all through Andenne without finding there, in the streets, the trace of *bombs*—in the roofs the appearance of tiles removed—in the ventilators the marks of bullets, shewing that a repressive fire had been directed against them. Some *cannon and machine-guns* had been put in action at Andenne, but by German soldiers; we know the places from which they were fired, the houses attacked. Neither the officers who ordered the firing, nor the soldiers treated at the field hospital, nor the troops on the march have ever spoken of *boiling water*. Soldiers, indeed, were burnt, but in setting fire to the houses.

* * *

If we had to characterise in a few words the events of Andenne—to the exclusion of what happened at Seilles, which is not in our diocese—we should say that there were two successive scenes independent of one another. The first, that of Thursday, was a *mad panic* amongst the German troops; the second, that of Friday, an *orgy of blood*.

On Thursday, the 20th of August, about 6.15 in the evening, shots were heard. Were they, as Goetze certifies, directed against an aeroplane? Were they accidental or intentional? Probably we shall never be able to determine. But the capital point, which one can no longer call in question, is that the shots were not fired from Andenne but from the heights of Seilles, and that *they were fired*, not by civilians, *but by German troops*.

When these shots were fired a first and rigorous duty was imposed: to inquire from what point the fire came. The chiefs should have preached calm, should have commenced an inquiry. They would immediately have ascertained that there was no Belgian or French soldier in the vicinity, that no civilian had any evil designs against the troops, and they would have found out that their own men had fired.

During the night of the 20th and 21st there were but *few victims*. These were peaceable or curious loiterers, surprised and struck down in the streets to the number of about ten. The inhabitants, who generally believed that a regular battle between the two armies was going on, passed the night in their cellars.

The tragic events of Andenne, which, it is asserted, were the repression of the attack of civilians, and the street fighting, followed this night, which was devoted to pillage and excessive drinking.

It was the morning of Friday, the 21st (a whole night therefore after the initial scene) on which the *sack of Andenne* really occurred. This was an appalling man-hunt. Certain soldiers killed all they met with revolver, rifle, bayonet or butt end. Others tore the people from their houses and dragged them to the square of Andenne without excepting the old, the sick or little children. There, under the eyes of the crowd, three inhabitants were, as an example, set against a wall and killed. Then in a scene as absurd as it was atrocious they made choice of the guilty. Those who had a scratch, had their hands or faces soiled, or revealed any detail which appeared suspicious, were placed on one side as *francs-tireurs*. These unfortunate and innocent people were afterwards carried away in three or four parties and have never been seen again.

And what makes the tragedy of Andenne especially sad is that many families of Andenne do not yet know whom they have to mourn. Two large ditches near the Meuse are full of corpses. The German authorities have not allowed their exhumation; we do not know the number or the names of the victims who lie there. Some retain the hope that all who disappeared were not killed, and that they will be found one day in the prisons of Germany.

* * *

Several inquiries have been made by the German authorities on the scenes of Andenne. In our opinion they tend very remarkably to establish the innocence of the population of Andenne, for the result is that the German authorities do not even attempt to establish either the origin of the firing, or the guilt of the clergy and civilians, or the legitimacy of the burnings and massacres.

A first inquiry was held on the 23rd of August by Lieutenant Backhaus. This bore specially upon the following points: "What did the parish priest say from the pulpit on Sunday last? Did he say that the inhabitants must shoot? Did he ring to give the signal? Was there a conspiracy? Do you know who threw the bombs?"

In the "White Book" there is no trace of this inquiry, probably because it was favourable to innocence.

For a long time past the charge against the honourable senior priest has been abandoned. All the officers and soldiers who passed through Namur and in the district between the Sambre and the Meuse have given an echo of it. Who has not heard these words which have served everywhere to terrorise: "*Pastor Andenne, Kaput!*"

Since the month of October the truth has come to light, good sense has got the upper hand. Even certain German organs have applied themselves to demonstrating the baselessness of the accusation. They have published certificates of innocence given by the military authorities themselves.*

Lieutenant Goetze made in January, 1915, a *second* inquiry, of which the official report has now been published. This officer seems to have been charged to carry his investigations not into the whole course of events, but into secondary circumstances: "Is it true that the Germans shot other doctors besides Dr. Camus? That they killed seven persons in the same family? That civilians were placed before a machine-gun under threat of death if the fort fired? That a young man was killed for having worn an empty cartridge as a charm?"

After interrogating eleven notables who had little to answer to this questioning which excluded

* See *Der Fels*, October and December, 1914.

the principal facts, the officer concludes "that reports unworthy of belief have circulated in Andenne and are attributable to the mentality of the people, which is, as a schoolmaster affirms, exceedingly feeble."*

* * *

There is, thank God, at Andenne a sufficiency of *certain facts* to make it unnecessary to invent them. We limit ourselves to putting the following on record :—

1. On the 19th of August the men of the *La Levée* district were seized by the German troops and compelled to march before them and serve them as a shield against the attacks of the Belgian soldiers in a reconnaissance at the wood of Stud ;

2. Ill-treatment was for a long time inflicted on a group of peaceful inhabitants of *Peu d'Eau* and *Hautebise*, who had been sent to Landenne, Amay and La Chartreuse ;

3. The slaughter of the civilians of Hautebise. On Thursday, the 20th of August, in the evening, at the entrance of the town soldiers carried away by rage fell upon them and killed them with the bayonet. About 15 persons, amongst whom were women and children, were massacred, others, wounded, were brutally finished off during the night ;

4. Numerous and needless fires were lighted not by artillery, as is said, but by hand, and accompanied by the pillage of the whole town ;

5. The execution of an as yet unknown number of innocent people, perhaps more than 200, of whom not one had fired or even committed the least act of ill-will against the troops.

These facts are not "rumours unworthy of belief," but *moving and lamentable realities*.

The feeling of the people of Andenne is that the disaster was *arranged beforehand*, and that the first salvo was the signal or the pretext for it.

This is confirmed by many facts ; we quote the following :—

On Thursday, the 20th of August, about 10 o'clock in the morning two houses, which overlook Andenne on the slope from Coutisse, were burnt without reason. "We will not burn now more than these two houses," said the officer, "but this afternoon we will burn the town."

Such are the principal facts about Andenne truly set forth. The more history shall study them the more will the baselessness and falsity of the German version on the one side and the gravity of the facts proved and laid to the charge of the invaders on the other become apparent.

iv.—Dinant.

(d.)—General Considerations.

The introductory Note of the "White Book" gives in a few words its verdict on Dinant, the result of 87 recorded depositions.

"At Dinant," it says, "*those who fell victims to the German armies were not innocent and peaceable citizens, but assassins, who threw themselves surreptitiously on the soldiers and engaged them in a combat fatal to the town.*"

He who knows the facts as to Dinant cannot contain his indignation in face of assertions so prodigious. We will state our opinion, nevertheless, with calm.

If we consider the German version in reference to those who have prepared it we shall call it *an audacious attack on the truth*. And if we consider it in reference to public opinion, which it is intended to enlighten, we shall call it *a clumsy misrepresentation*.

We very much doubt if the German version of the facts of Dinant can gain credence among the Germans themselves, for this would be to impute too much folly and credulity to an enlightened people.

We affirm after a conscientious inquiry that this version is absolutely inaccurate, except in certain topographic details and in reference to some indications, secondary but valuable, such as the avowal of the destruction of the town and Collegiate Church, and the names of the officers and troops who were responsible.

It will not be difficult some day to make the truth appear in a luminous and definitive manner.

We only await the moment when the impartial historian can come to Dinant, to note on the spot what has happened and to interrogate the survivors. A sufficient number of these remain to reconstruct the whole of the facts in their truth and sincerity. Then the innocence of the victims and the guilt of the aggressors will be made manifest, and it will be established that the German army abandoned itself to a cruelty as useless as it was inexplicable. Then the world, which has already condemned with an extreme and just severity the massacre of nearly 700 civilians and the destruction of an ancient town, with its monuments, its archives and its industry, will shew itself yet more severe against these butchers for having tried to exculpate themselves by calumniating their victims.

* * *

Before entering upon the examination in detail of the "White Book" we affirm, *as facts absolutely certain which it will be impossible to impugn*, the following points :—

1. The communal authorities, carrying out the directions of the Belgian Government, had, by notices dated the 6th of August, *ordered the handing in of all arms*.

Here follows the text of these notices, which luckily escaped the fire of the Town Hall and the whole town :—

* The schoolmaster mentioned formally denies having ever given this description, which is as insulting as it is unmerited.

I.—TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF DINANT.

Notice is hereby given to the inhabitants, under pain of immediate arrest, to bring to the police station all wireless telegraph apparatus for receipt or transmission of telegrams, and all firearms and ammunition in their possession.

Dinant,
6th August, 1914.

The Burgomaster,
A. DEFOIN.

II.—NOTICE TO INHABITANTS.

Formal notice is hereby given to the inhabitants that civilians must not take part in any attack or violence by firearms or otherwise against the enemy troops.

Such attacks are forbidden by international law and will expose their authors, perhaps even the town itself, to the gravest consequences.

Dinant,
6th August, 1914.

The Burgomaster,
A. DEFOIN.

2. The inhabitants obeyed this instruction *by bringing their arms to the Town Hall*. By a very laudable excess of precaution the local police had before the 15th of August made *numerous domiciliary searches* even at the houses of quite peaceable citizens to make certain of the handing in of arms. Anciaux, the police officer, presented himself at the house of the Dean of the town to notify to him that he had not handed in any arms. He would not leave until he had received from this ecclesiastic a formal assurance that he had never had either a gun or a revolver. The quantity of arms collected proved the efficacy of these minute precautions. This quantity is considerable for a town of less than 8,000 inhabitants, taking into account the restricted number of sportsmen and the absence of any arms in many houses.

The Germans will not deny these facts: they themselves carried off all these arms. On the 24th of August two German wagons stopped at the last house in Dinant near the level crossing in the direction of Bouvignes. Civilians who saw them recognised the sporting guns, revolvers, old guns and arms of all sorts brought from the Town Hall. Under the eyes of these civilians the officers selected expensive sporting guns in leather cases of which they there and then filed the padlocks. Another lot of these arms which were found at the regimental school were in the hands of the German soldiers on the 24th and 25th of August.

Hence it is evident that enough arms did not remain in the town to do the murderous work of which the population is accused. It must also be noted that on the 23rd of August there were not on the east bank 4,000 people of Dinant—men, women, and children—in a position to take part in this pretended attack. Many families were absent. Yet in reading the "White Book" one gets the impression that a large and well-organised population had been able to hold its own against the great German army, which had even been compelled to retire in order to bombard the town.

3. In conformity with the regulations, *the Civic Guard had previously deposited all their arms and all cartridges and ammunition in the hands of the local authorities, who had sent them away in a known direction*.

4. The inhabitants were so little disposed to such an act of hostility to the Germans that at different times between the 6th and 23rd of August German soldiers had shewn themselves at Dinant and *had not been molested*. On the 15th of August they had without hindrance penetrated into the heart of the town in considerable numbers, since they made 59 French soldiers prisoners. They entered several times during the course of the following nights. On the 21st, about midday, and again in the evening, an Uhlan coming from Rocher-Bayard passed all through Dinant, ascended the Rue St. Jacques and disappeared. If any Uhlans were killed about these dates they were killed by Belgian or French soldiers; two soldiers wounded in the Rue St. Jacques on the 7th of August were made prisoners and could testify that they were shot at by a Belgian cyclist, whose name is known; on the 14th of August, about 10 a.m., two Uhlans were killed by French cyclists, as their companion who was made prisoner can testify.

5. The civil population remained *completely* aloof from the military operations of the night of the 21st to 22nd of August.

The "White Book" with real impudence dares to assert that, at a signal given by a shot, firing began from all the houses, that these were barricaded, and that they had to be forced open with the butt-ends of rifles, with the help of hatchets and hand bombs; that barbed wire was stretched across the road; that many soldiers were wounded by small shot and stones; that, in face of the impossibility of clearing the place of *francs-tireurs* they were obliged to reduce them by setting fire to the houses from which they fired; that evidently they had made arrangements long beforehand for this attack, etc.*

Yet these are the incidents which characterised the *sack of Rue St. Jacques*. On the 21st of August at about 9.15, German soldiers to the number of about 150 descended the Rue St. Jacques, coming from the direction of Ciney, yelling like savages, breaking the street lamps, firing thousands of shots at the windows and house fronts, throwing incendiary bombs into a quantity of houses, fifteen of which were set on fire, filling all the population of the quarter with terror. They came thus near to the Grand' Place, sacking everything on their way. Towards 10.30 they retired, some by the Rue St. Pierre and by Leffe, where they continued their exploits though in a modified degree, the others by the Rue St. Jacques. Eighty incendiary bombs with fuses were collected in the street after their departure; moreover, one civilian alone collected 19 kilos of unfired cartridges.

This scene, which nothing provoked and nothing explains, has been represented in the German narrative as a defensive struggle. One civilian, it is true, was shot that night, but he was a peaceful workman at the German gas-works, who was returning home. Moreover, he was not killed in the Rue St. Jacques. Four persons were wounded by bullets or bombs thrown into their houses. One other, on

* *Zusammenfassender Bericht*, p. 117.

opening his door, was struck with seven bayonet thrusts. And this is the long, desperate and premeditated combat, which the "White Book" has manufactured in all its details to excuse the conduct of a handful of soldiers giving free rein to their rage for destruction.

6. On the 23rd of August, as on the 21st, *there was not the slightest indication of street fighting.*

About 6.30 in the morning the Germans entered the houses of the St. Nicolas quarter, and in the afternoon the houses of the St. Pierre quarter.

The inhabitants were mostly in the cellars for fear of shells.

The soldiers broke down the doors and, revolver in hand, forced the inhabitants to follow them. The rest is known. Scenes of horror were enacted in the houses and in the streets. Some of the inhabitants were *massacred* in groups by rifle fire. Others served as *cover* to the German troops against the fire of the French. Some inhabitants finally were penned in different buildings. And whilst these cold-blooded cruelties were accomplished, the army gave itself up to systematic pillage of the whole city under the eyes of the officers, and even by their orders.

We will not reproduce the long and incredible fantasies, engendered by German imagination, in reference to the combat which they declare was organised by the population to arrest the march of the army, a combat in which priests and children are supposed to have taken part, a combat which respected neither doctors nor wounded, a combat which neither the fire, nor the blood spilt, nor the bombardment could restrain, and which was prolonged for three days. . . .

* * *

The spirit of the people, far from being inclined to resistance or rebellion, was a prey to the terror and distraction produced by the invasion. Had they even possessed arms the inhabitants would not have dreamt of using them. If the people of Dinant feared the reverberations of battle engaged in by the armies round their town, they had, on the other hand, a delusive confidence in the humanity of the German troops.

We affirm as a certain fact that *no civilian was taken or found bearing arms*, either amongst the hundreds of those who were shot or amongst the thousands of prisoners shut up in the Abbey of Leffe, in the military school, in the prison, or in the iron-works and stable of M. Bouille.

One case was doubtful: it was notified that a man had been taken carrying a revolver without ammunition. The minute inquiry which was held not only confirmed his innocence but established, in the most certain manner, that a German soldier *had put a revolver in his pocket, whilst he held his arms raised, and had afterwards taken back the revolver whilst accusing him of being armed.* He was immediately bound and shot. Eye-witnesses, and there are many, will attest this monstrous act.

It is no less notorious that none of the civilians who were shot had previously been, *we do not say condemned, but even heard.* No sort of inquiry was held.

After these considerations of a general nature, we enter on the details of the "White Book" by examining:—

1. The precise facts quoted and the contradictions in the story;
2. The burning of the town and collegiate church;
3. The great fusillades and other facts of sufficient importance to be referred to specially;
4. The question of premeditation.

i.—Actual Facts and Contradictions.

The "White Book," although it devotes a very large space (116 pages) to Dinant, gives, relatively to the incidents cited, only a very small number of actual details, and in general does not associate with them any indication of place or person allowing their identification.

We will disclose the whole of these incidents. It will be seen that they in no way correspond to the reality.

Sergeant Bartsch* affirms that the daughter of a Luxemburger had been hit by a shot fired from the opposite bank of the river, and that according to the evidence of the child's father "parents gave revolvers to their children of ten and twelve years of age to shoot the Germans."

This civilian, who has been identified, gives the lie categorically to these statements. His daughter had been hit by shots which the German soldiers (they were seen) fired in front of her, and she died from the consequences of a wound made by a German bullet. He formally denies the odious remark attributed to him. He has never even spoken to a German sergeant.

The witness Hund† claims to have shot in a garden at Leffe a lad of twelve years of age who held a revolver in his hand and whom he recognised as the son of the advocate Adam. Now the latter has only a son of 24 years of age who was away from home on this day. Moreover, no child of twelve years of age was shot at Leffe. The youngest victim was more than 15 years old and was killed in the lower part of Leffe in the garden of his house.

The soldier Einax‡ affirms that on the 23rd of August they brought eight men out of a house from which shots were fired, and amongst them the parish priest, wearing an armlet of the Red Cross. What does this vague and suggestive accusation mean? If this priest had actually fired from the house he would have been shot. But there was no victim amongst the parochial clergy.

The Burgomaster of Bouvignes, persuaded that there were no *francs-tireurs* in Bouvignes or its neighbourhood, gives the lie direct to the assertion of Lieutenant of Reserve Lemke,§ according to which "he shewed his indignation against the *francs-tireurs*." He has no recollection of having discussed the exploits of *francs-tireurs* with this officer. He affirms upon his honour that no civilian in his commune fired on the German troops.

The Burgomaster of Dinant gives a formal denial to the story|| which assigns him a share in the events of Les Rivages and Neffe. The words and actions attributed to him are imaginary; he was not there at any moment of the day.

* Appendix 10.

† Appendix 62.

‡ Appendix 18.

§ Appendix 83.

|| Appendix 44.

See above, pp. 156 and 157. (Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry).

Dinant also had, according to the "White Book," its "*Belgian atrocities*." The soldier Müller,* because he had seen corpses with deep wounds or cuts placed on a rug or cushions, immediately concludes that these soldiers had been surprised in their sleep!

Much is made of the injury to the head of a soldier seen at the Château of Sorinne, and, above all, of the charred bodies of one or two soldiers whose hands and feet were bound with wire, under a heap of burnt straw, on the road from Sorinne to Dinant, "and who appeared to have been burnt alive."†

There was also the traditional soldier "*with eyes put out*;" Captain von Lippe saw him.

As to the guilt of the people of Dinant in these pretended atrocities, as no deposition of the "White Book" dares assert it—scarcely hints it—*we will dwell no longer upon it*. But it is our duty to point out the gravity of this proceeding. The "White Book" inserts nearly ten reports upon a pretended act of atrocity. Yet none of these reports prove or even assert the guilt of the inhabitants of Dinant, which is, however, implied. Not one even states the smallest precise fact which would allow of inquiry, explanation or checking. How shall we characterise this systematic insistence which aims at making an accusation without any foundation acceptable by suggestion?

The "White Book" relates in nearly every page that civilians shot with sporting guns. It is false, and the Germans find it impossible to prove it. But do the German authorities not know that civilians have been riddled with sporting shot? The German doctors know it. And the shots were fired by German soldiers—this is firmly established.

We note some of the numerous *contradictions* with which the "White Book" is studded.

It asserts at one and the same time, on the one hand, that at the date of the 17th of August there were no more French on the east bank of the river,‡ and, on the other hand, that the attack of the night of the 21st and 22nd had thrown the enemy back on to the other side of the river; § on the one hand, that the fusillade coming from the windows of the factory at Leffe on the 23rd at midnight did not cease until the factory was burnt; now, on the other hand, it is certain that the burning did not take place until the evening of the 24th.||

Major Lommatsch was killed, according to the first report, by two civilians firing from the first floor,¶ according to a second report, by an elderly man with short grey hair coming out of a house.**

This is the case, we believe, of one of the officers shot by German soldiers. Civilians clearly saw them firing from the window of a house known to us in the Rue Adolphe-Sax.

Numerous contradictions occur, more especially in the depositions referring to the fusillades. We shall refer to them in their turn.

ii.—Burning of the Town and the Collegiate Church.

The "White Book," wishing to free the Germans from the reproach of having destroyed Dinant out of barbarity, or for the purpose of unjustifiable intimidation, seeks to represent the burning of the town as an act of war demanded by military necessities.

"The troops," says the "White Book," "being prevented from advancing through the town by the fighting of *francs-tireurs*, the 12th Regiment of Artillery set fire to the town by a bombardment."††

This justification is contradicted by the facts.

The quarter of the left bank of the river, where the College of Bellevue and the hospital and monastery of the Dominicans are situated, received German shells, but remains standing for the most part.

As to the town properly so-called situated on the east bank, it received only an insignificant number of projectiles and would have remained intact if it had only had to suffer from the artillery. Unhappily everything there was burnt by hand, house by house, systematically, after a disgraceful pillage. The soldiers used at once bombs and hand grenades, incendiary cartridges and appliances, inflammable pastilles, dynamite, petrol and benzine. This fire was prolonged over the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, during which time all the population was under military guard in various buildings outside the town.

In September, 1914, a Bavarian major, passing through Dinant and seeing these lamentable ruins, said to the senior parish priest of the town: "Sir, it is frightful. They told me Dinant had been bombarded. There is not a trace of a bombardment!" This evidence of the barbarism of the soldiers so moved him that he shed tears.

As to the Collegiate Church, the Germans assert that they only burnt it because "they fired on us from the building."

Have they not said that a machine-gun was installed in the belfry? Yet the senior parish priest affirms on his honour that he had the doors of the church fastened on the 23rd of August at 9 o'clock in the morning. No one could enter and he was himself certain of this at the hour when the roof was already burning. Moreover, it would only have been possible to fire from those places to which the towers gave access, and these were still carefully locked at the date of the 28th of August.

There was therefore no strategic necessity for bombarding the Collegiate Church. And if some shots, directed against the citadel, strayed and struck it in certain parts, it is certain that they did not cause the main fire, since on the day of the 27th of August the troops set fire to the great door of the church. Dr. Pfeiffer has given the most contradictory explanations, attributing the destruction of the Collegiate Church sometimes to the German artillery, sometimes to the French artillery. On the 16th of June in his letter to Mgr. Baudrillart, he speaks of the citadel as a fortress which was on the 23rd of August in the hands of the French. "Are you," writes he, "so foolish as to demand that a citadel which impedes the advance of an army and which pours death on its men should not be

* Appendix 73.

† Appendices 59, 67, 74 to 78.

‡ *Zusammenfassender Bericht*, p. 117.

§ Appendix 1.

|| Appendix 65.

¶ Appendix 13.

** Appendix 18.

†† Appendix 19.

bombarded because below it there is a church which might be destroyed? " * Less than a month later, on the 11th of July, he writes: "The French have shelled the church of Notre Dame to such an extent that only a window remains standing." †

And the learned gentleman followed the German armies and studied the facts on the spot!

Other writers have given currency to the most extravagant fantasies concerning Dinant, making efforts, unscrupulous but futile, to throw the scandal of the responsibility for its destruction upon the French or upon the Belgians.

"Nearly all the houses of Dinant," writes Wegener, ‡ "were destroyed by bombardment and burnt during the fights, for the most part by the French themselves, whose projectiles hit the houses of the town, instead of the positions occupied by the Germans on the opposite heights, at the time of their retreat."

"The ill-directed artillery of the flying French," writes another, § "occasioned considerable destruction during their retreat, and unfortunately hit the cathedral."

"On the other side," continues the same writer, "the French remaining in Belgium assert that the Belgians in flight themselves set fire to Belgian places which they had robbed and pillaged, so as to deprive the Germans of every means of subsistence."

"With bleeding hearts the Germans passed through the valley of the Meuse, destroyed without reason or necessity."

"Germany has never carried war into the abodes of citizens. But the French make war as formerly M^{el}ac and his companions in infamy made it, burning the castles and villages of peaceful Luxemburg, of the Meuse and of the Rhine."

These same writers dare to put similar accusations against the French army into the mouth of the senior parish priest of the town. This venerable ecclesiastic protests against these accusations and gives them an energetic denial.

The "White Book" speaks perpetually of *explosions of munitions* in the houses on fire and adduces this as a proof of the armed resistance of civilians.

What is the value of this accusation? We shall first note that the explosions heard were neither so frequent nor so important as the "White Book" makes out. Civilian prisoners who passed through the town when it was on fire are unanimous in bearing witness to this.

Besides, what caused these explosions?

According to the German version it was a case of the explosion of ammunition collected by the *francs-tireurs*. It was nothing of the sort. A number of these reports were due to the explosion of oil, alcohol, and spirit, which happened to be in either the houses of tradesmen and chemists or of private individuals. Others were caused by the hand bombs thrown by German soldiers, by ammunition left by them in private houses or placed there by design, as numerous witnesses can prove.

Did we not ourselves find, on the departure of the soldiers billeted at the Bishop's Palace, a whole basket of ammunition left by them in the loft, and, what was still more serious, three dozen German cartridges carefully mixed in the coal which was for use in the kitchen? We notified these facts at the time to the German authorities?

At Dinant, says the "White Book," they killed the soldiers by stoning. German machine-guns, firing at the house fronts, brought down fragments of stone on the soldiers.

At Namur, at the Episcopal Palace, the soldiers also complained of being assailed with stones during the night; yet a summary inquiry established—however incredible it may appear—that the terrified sentinels took the ripe pears which fell from the trees for stones!

• iii.—*Great Fusillade and other Important Facts.*

In the St. Pierre quarter, says the "White Book," "50 men caught in the act of firing at us were shot."|| It says no more about the matter.

In reality some 40 innocent persons of all ages perished, fell under German bullets, and with their pure blood the hands of Captain Wilke, of the 178th Regiment of Infantry, who ordered the execution, will be for ever stained.

These unfortunate victims had fled stealthily from their threatened houses. They were hidden in the cellars of the Nicaise Brewery. They would have escaped massacre had not an accidental circumstance revealed their presence. Then an officer harshly dragged them out, separated the men from the women, and whilst the women took themselves off by the Rue Benjamin Devigne, he lined up the men against a wall and had them executed. In vain did a Professor of the Communal College, who knew German and who witnessed the tragic scene from a distance, deem it his duty to sacrifice himself and come to plead their innocence. He was himself the first victim.

The horrible fusillade of the wall near the Place d'Armes (mur Tschoffen).—By a truly ignoble refinement of cruelty, the massacre which took place near the Place d'Armes was perpetrated under the eyes of the wives and children of the victims. This barbarous execution was ordered by Lieutenant-Colonel Kielmannsegg.

According to the "White Book" this fusillade served to punish "about 100 guilty men¶ who had been caught with arms in their hands."***

Is there any need to give another denial? The 150 men who were victims of this butchery were peaceable citizens whose names are known. All had been snatched from their own homes, *not one was found in the possession of arms*. A great number, arrested early, were still but partly dressed; the soldiers, in carrying them off, assured them that the civil population had nothing to fear; that they ran no risk; they made no charge against them.

* *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, 23rd June, 1915.

† *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, 11th July, 1915.

‡ *Kölnische Zeitung*, 26th November, 1914.

§ SCHEUERMANN, in *Die Post*, 29th November, 1914.

¶ Appendix 26.

|| Appendix 7.

** Appendix 10

Towards evening of the 23rd of August they were taken away from the places where they had been penned, and without a shadow of inquiry or judgment they were put against a wall and shot.

The most odious arbitrariness dictated the conduct of the German troops on this occasion. Other inhabitants of Dinant, made prisoners in the same houses from which it was asserted that their fellow citizens had fired on the Germans, were simply transported to Cassel, in Germany, instead of being shot like the first. This difference of treatment was not based on any plausible reason. The aim of the Germans was not to punish the guilty, but to make the population pay for the imaginary crimes of which by their account their troops had been the victims.

This is evident from the speech delivered by an officer, in very bad French, before ordering the fire :

"They have fired on our soldiers from an ambulance ; they have fired from houses bearing the Red Cross ; they have fired from a hospital. You civilians have fired on our soldiers. We are going to give you a lesson."

The accusation of having fired from Red Cross premises, of having fired from a hospital, is repeated several times in the "White Book." Yet it is a proved fact that no one fired or committed the least reprehensible act from any of the five or six establishments which on the 23rd of August showed the Cross of Geneva. Did the German army, then, think to make the Civil Hospital responsible for the existence of certain loopholes in a wall of an independent property next to the hospital? These loopholes had been contrived by the French troops.*

Or will it be maintained that the establishment of the Dominican nuns was responsible for the trenches dug by the same troops in the neighbourhood of, but quite outside, their property? This would be to misunderstand altogether the right of defence of an army and thus to invent a pretext for striking down the innocent.†

At Dinant no abuse can be imputed to the Red Cross.

Had there been such abuse, it would have justified the punishment of the guilty, not the massacre of the civilians of the opposite bank of the river.

After all, is it well for the German army to assume the character of accuser?—that army which has violated in so flagrant a manner the prescriptions of the Law of Nations? What have its soldiers done at Dinant? They have burnt five chemists shops, killed two chemists, killed one doctor, put two doctors against the wall to be shot, torn the armlet of the Red Cross violently and without making any charge from three other practitioners, attacked the Abbey of Leffe which had been converted into a field hospital, and bombarded two establishments on the west bank where the Genevan flag floated, one of which they nearly destroyed.

On whose side, then, is the violation of international conventions?

* * *

The fusillade of the Abbey of Leffe was especially murderous.

On the evening of the 23rd of August the populous parish of Leffe contained no more than 10 men.

Two hundred and forty victims, of whom some were young people of 15 and 16 years of age, 167 widows, and hundreds of orphans ; such was the lamentable total of a few hours!

The population had been, since the morning, herded in the Norbertine Abbey. They believed themselves in security there under the protection of the monks. On the 23rd, about 10 o'clock, an officer mustered his men : "Up with your arms! Have no fear! No harm shall be done you! Go out!" They went out, advanced, and, a minute after, the fire of a platoon laid them dead in front of the wall of M. Servais' house. Throughout the day other groups were executed at this place and increased the heap of corpses.

Towards 2 o'clock an officer of the 178th Saxon Regiment said to the Vêry Reverend Abbot : "You are going to pay up 60,000 francs for having fired on our troops. If in two hours the sum is not forthcoming, the Abbey will be burnt." They were able to save the ancient monastery by payment of 15,000 francs laboriously collected.

But during this time the savage slaughter continued.

M. Victor Poncelet, the reviver of the ancient industry of copper and brass work, caught between two fires by the furious soldiers, who had entered his house from all sides, appealed to their pity on behalf of his numerous family : "You are not going to kill the father of seven children!" "No pity for men to-day!" was the reply. He fell in the hall, shot point blank by an officer under the eyes of his wife and seven children, the eldest of whom was twelve years old. The troops installed themselves in the house, there drinking to excess, playing music, and ceaselessly striding over the body, which remained on the spot where it had fallen until the Wednesday.

M. Himmer, the great manufacturer, the providence of the working men of Leffe, who invoked his title of Consul, and offered his whole fortune to save the lives of himself and his workmen, received this reply : "It is not money we want, but blood!"

Nor must we omit the sufferings endured by the survivors, kept prisoners in the Abbey till Thursday. They made the poor widows and children cry : "Long live Germany! Long live the Kaiser!" A Saxon officer shouted : "If I hear these children cry again I shall shoot you all in a heap." They compelled the women and children to kneel before an empty machine-gun, which they worked!

Finally, we must record the vandalism exercised on the objects of art in the Abbey church and in the Abbey and the sad Calvary of the monks, some of whom were sent to Marche, the others shot.

The "White Book" ‡ relates a long and mysterious history of ghosts, in reference to two forms, enveloped in white linen, who leapt into the Meuse. These, alas! were the two Norbertine monks, Friar Boug, aged 60 years, and Canon Nicolas Perreu, aged 40 years, who were killed by the German soldiers. Terrified by the massacre of the men of Leffe and by the threats of the officers, they

* Appendices 9, 56, 67, 69, 70.

† How can Captain Zeidler write that these houses were only bombarded because it had been incontestably established that they were occupied by hostile and armed inhabitants (Appendix 70).

‡ Appendices 64 and 65.

had taken refuge in the canal, which passes below the Abbey and flows into the Meuse. The soldiers discovered the hiding place, pursued the two fugitives there and killed them. The bodies of the poor victims were found later in the river.

Germany has nothing but contemptuous and insulting remarks to make concerning the inhabitants of Leffe. She even adds to these calumny.

"Above all," writes Grasshoff, "the wicked people of Leffe—as they are called by the lips of children—distinguished themselves in atrocities. German soldiers were mutilated; Saxon Jägers, who had been burnt alive, were found attached by the feet to stakes driven into the ground." "The ravines of Dinant might well be called the valley of death."*

We protest with the utmost energy against these odious words, and if we sympathise from the bottom of our heart with the sufferings of the parishes of Dinant and with so many hundreds of others who have suffered, we feel a respectful tenderness before the misfortune of this parish of Leffe, whose entire innocence we affirm, having established it after a minute inquiry.

* * *

One scene surpasses in horror all the rest; this is *the fusillade of the Rocher Bayard*.

It seems to have been ordered by Colonel Meister.†

This fusillade was a terrible visitation for all the neighbouring parishes, especially those of Les Rivages and Neffe.

It cut off about 90 human lives without sparing age or sex. Amongst the victims were infants at the breast, boys and young girls, fathers and mothers of families, even old people.

Twelve children of less than six years, six of whom were in their mothers' arms, perished there under the bullets of the executioners:—

The infant Fiévet, of 3 weeks;

Maurice Bétemps, of 11 months;

Nelly Polet, of 11 months;

Gilda Genon, of 18 months;

Gilda Marchot, of 2 years;

Clara Struvay, of 2 years and a half.

The heap of corpses included also many children of from 6 to 14 years.

Eight large families have entirely disappeared. Four have only one survivor.

The men who escaped massacre, some of whom were riddled with wounds, were obliged by the soldiers to bury summarily and immediately their fathers, their mothers, their brothers and their sisters; then, after having been robbed of their money and bound, they were sent to Cassel.

No language in the world has expressions capable of stigmatizing such horrors!

The "White Book" endeavours to save the honour of Germany on the score of this vile massacre; it resorts at once to lies and to extenuating circumstances.

Major Schlick‡ shews a bold front. In the street fighting, which lasted, says he, till late into the night, all the population, on a given signal, fired with real fury. Men of all ages, women and even little girls of 10 years old, fired from the houses. The soldiers shot about twenty of these maniacs and amongst them some women who fired surreptitiously on the backs of the companies. Is not the killing even of children legitimate in such circumstances?

Major Steinhoff§ evidently makes an attempt to conceal the shooting of women and children. He relates that Colonel Meister had had the houses ransacked, that they had brought out the civilians, that the men were placed near the wall and the women and children further off below. Some time after, retracing his steps, he saw a heap of corpses at the spot where the men prisoners were standing.

Staff-Surgeon Petrenz,|| who visited the heap of corpses, enters into details; he estimates the dead at 30 or 40, young people for the most part, and some women. He found under the heap of victims two children, one of 5 years, unwounded, to whom he gave some chocolate, the other, of about 10 years, who had a wound in the knee. He made sure next day that no one had been buried alive.

Major Paazig¶ saw the corpses. "Their wounds are such as to lead one to believe that they were made by the projectiles of artillery."

Sergeant-Major Bartusch,** evidently questioned as to the murder of women and children at Dinant, attempts to justify it, but, unfortunately, he confuses the two scenes. He only saw the fusillade of the Tschoffen wall, and it is for that that he invents an explanation. "Women," writes he, "might have been present behind the wall, and may have been killed by the bullets which passed through this wall, or possibly they fell under the bullets of the French coming from the other bank of the river."

Contradictory depositions which destroy one another!

This is what is written in the *General Report*:—

"At Les Rivages, some women and children were hit at the time of the execution of hostages. They had, contrary to the arrangements made and in the general confusion, left the place indicated for them, away from the men, and had rejoined these last." (Appendices 45 and 46).

We note first of all that these explanations, which are not based on any document or inquiry, are invented throughout by the writer of the report. They are, moreover, in express contradiction to the facts. The 45 victims of Neffe were arbitrarily detached from an earlier group of prisoners, transported to the east bank of the Meuse at two different times, and added to 27 victims of St. Paul and to those of other quarters. No distinction was made at this moment between young people and old, between men, women and children. All were put in ranks by the soldiers and driven to the wall of M. Bourdon's garden, against which they were shot.

* *Belgiens Schuld*, p. 43.

† Appendix 48.

‡ Appendix 44.

§ Appendix 48.

|| Appendix 51.

¶ Appendix 49.

** Appendix 10.

"*They fired on us!*" says the "White Book." This accusation will not hold water; the hills covered with bushes and the houses from which the pretended shots were fired were occupied from 6 o'clock in the morning by German troops.

We are about to learn from the Germans themselves the truth concerning the scene of the Rocher Bayard.

For some hours, from the moment when they were torn from their houses until the fusillade, the civilians of Rivages-Anseremme did not cease to protest and affirm that those who fired were not civilians but *French soldiers*, in small numbers moreover, who were occupying the height above Neffe on the opposite bank.

M. Bourdon, the registrar, also insisted upon this; obliged, under pain of death, to cross the Meuse, in order to stop the firing from the opposite bank, *he affirmed on his return that the civilians were innocent.* His devotion did not save his life or the lives of his wife and children.

Let readers mark well this detail that they may impress it on their minds with care: *all the shots came from hands legitimately armed.*

The German officers themselves also fully realised it; "*If the French fire again you will all die!*" said one of them to a group of both sexes near the brewery of Anseremme.

And the very officer who ordered this barbarous fusillade, had, a few minutes before the execution, used the following language to the victims: "*All of you, francs-tireurs and others, have fired on our soldiers. If the French fire again one single time, you will all without exception, men, women and children, be killed.*"

The fire of the French from the opposite hills was thus visited upon the inhabitants of Leffe. As to the alleged abuse of the Red Cross, which served as a pretext for the fusillade of the Tschoffen wall, it never existed, but the Germans were enraged by the fire of the French from the other bank. The same is the case with the fusillade of the Rocher Bayard. The German reports confirm this implicitly.

"The fire of the enemy infantry from the left bank was very feeble," says the report of the Pioneers.*

"Then the enemy fire from the other bank commenced," writes Major Steinhoff,† "*and, at the same time, I heard some short volleys in my immediate neighbourhood. I retraced my steps and I saw a heap of corpses on the spot where the male prisoners had been.*"

One has only to compare these declarations with the harangue of the executioner!

* * *

The cruel author of the *bloody slaughter of the Charrau at Neffe* is, says the "White Book," Major von Zeschau, of the 101st Regiment of Grenadiers.

He has given an account of it,‡ which records exactly the route followed, but which, as an account of the facts, is a tissue of lies.

Why, first of all, does he conceal the fact that the soldiers, in passing through the village of Neffe, exterminated some innocent families?

They arrived afterwards at the place called the Charrau, where 51 inhabitants, largely women and children, had taken refuge under an aqueduct, when they learned that "*the Germans were burning everything and killing everybody.*"

The soldiers approached the aqueduct. They perceived, according to the report, a civilian with a weapon like a carbine. This was Vital Séha, the tailor of Dinant, who happened to be at the left angle of the bridge. He carried, the witnesses assert, a great coat rolled in a glazed cover like a sheath. That is what seemed to be the weapon of a *franc-tireur*! It was he, who, being most conspicuous, was the first victim.

According to Von Zeschau, he ordered five or six soldiers to fire some shots, in all ten or a dozen, into the aqueduct in order to make those who had taken refuge there come out. Then without saying a word of the victims, he adds that he left there a non-commissioned officer, who made 35 to 40 civilians come out.

These words contain the avowal of the crime, but the report is mutilated, deformed, and warped.

According to the evidence of the survivors the Germans advanced, yelling like wild beasts. They fired under the culvert from both sides. They threw in hand bombs. In a twinkling there was nothing there but a heap of flesh and blood. There were there some twenty corpses and a dozen mutilated survivors. One of these, in a shocking state, was sent to Cassel. Two others, conducted to Les Rivages with the inhabitants of Neffe, were there immediately torn from the arms of their father and died the following night. Yet others succumbed, untended, to their frightful wounds.

The soldiers left the bodies, unburied, on the bridge. Their only guardian was a dog, faithful to his master, the child Bultot; he would not leave them even when, on the Thursday or Friday, the bodies were burnt, and he perished in the flames.

* * *

Among the crimes which disgrace humanity, none perhaps excite more reprobation than that of the soldier *who misuses children and women to protect himself from the enemy*, forgetting thus the dignity of his profession.

In its official communication of the 30th of August of this year, the Great General Staff of Germany itself condemned, in severe terms, a similar proceeding of which it accused a hostile army.

Did it not feel that it signed, hereby, the condemnation of its own army, which, not in one isolated case, but at each step, so to say, in its passage through the diocese, has sought to protect itself behind a rampart of civilians?

At Dinant, on the 23rd of August, between 8 and 11 o'clock in the morning, the French soldiers, who occupied the ridge of the west bank, saw, drawn up in line at Les Rivages, at the place called the *Redoute*, numerous civilians, men, women and children. And behind this living rampart the German soldiers sheltered themselves and fired kneeling.

* Appendix 39.

† Appendix 48.

‡ Appendix 40.

The same scene was reproduced at the Place Albeau and other spots in the town.

Dinant counts many of these poor victims who were hit by the bullets of their own friends.

To one leading man who protested against this crying violation of international law, the officer confined himself to replying: "I have my soldiers to protect!"

On the morning of the next day a lady, whom the soldiers wished to prevent from placing herself in safety, dared to say to the officer: "Are you not ashamed so to expose women and children?" And he replied: "If our blood must flow, yours may well flow too!"

These facts recall to us the avowal made to us some months ago by a German officer: "There is no chivalry in this war. It must be admitted that we Germans have a superior culture. But sad to say, scarcely was war declared than there was no more of it."

We note also as a flagrant injustice *that civilians were held responsible*, without previous inquiry, for some works of defence made by the French military authority, especially at the houses of the St. Médard quarter and in the streets of the suburb of Leffe. The "White Book" has, moreover, singularly magnified the number and importance of these.

Do the Germans forget, too, that they made similar works at the houses of Les Rivages?

What is the meaning then of these incessant reproaches for having "barricaded the houses and for having prepared them for fighting?" If the inhabitants had carefully closed the doors and shutters and sometimes put mattresses in the windows, these were measures of precaution against bullets and hand bombs, measures justified by the scene of Friday evening.

* * *

The territory of Dinant and its environs have been the theatre of many other acts which we can only notice briefly.

The *hunt of civilians*—a real game drive—in the houses, in the streets, in the mountains and in the ruins, went on for three days. No one will ever know the sufferings endured by the poor victims, but one can get an idea of it from the evidence of the survivors. The story of eyewitnesses is necessary to make us understand the rage and the thirst for blood which animated certain groups of soldiers madly excited against the civilians. Others, by terrifying stage effects, threw their prisoners into mortal terror; they indulged in sham fusillades, made them listen to the clashing of arms, fired in the air, and then said that it was the *francs-tireurs*. Old men and invalids, women and children remained thus for hours under threat of death. On Monday afternoon a German corpse was several times produced and removed to enable them to say to successive groups of civilians: "This is your work!"

The soldiers poured out an *incessant flood of insults* upon the prisoners without distinction of sex or condition: "Advance, human brutes!" cried an officer to the poor inhabitants of Neffe.

The *days of imprisonment* were also miserable. The prisoners suffered hunger and thirst and underwent intimidation in all its forms. Thousands of unfortunates were mourning for their dear ones, and were without bread and without shelter. Even at the present moment could anything be more heart-breaking than the spectacle of thousands lodged either in the ruins themselves or in the poorest shelter?

Another affecting incident was the sad *exile of 415 prisoners* at Cassel. They were mourned for as victims for a long time.

Let us note, finally, the detention at Marche of 34 priests and monks to whom the German authorities expressed tardy regrets for the treatment inflicted and sent a testimonial of innocence.

All the families of Dinant, even those who do not number any victims, were cruelly tried in those frightful days.

And if you doubt our words, or if you think them exaggerated, go to Dinant and question the survivors; you will then be enlightened as to the horrible tragedy.

* * *

Nothing is more painful and even revolting to those familiar with the scenes of cruelty, which we have only as yet very incompletely outlined, than the insistence of the "White Book" on the *clemency of the German soldiers towards the civil population*.

Specially questioned upon this point at the inquiry, the deponent officers unanimously assert that "they have no knowledge of their soldiers having committed any cruelties." Some go further; they make them out to be prodigies of kindness. "The inhabitants of Leffe," write they, "were well treated; when their provisions were exhausted they were revictualled from the field kitchens."* Major Schlick admires the calm that his soldiers opposed to the fury of the brutes of Dinant.† At Rocher-Bayard they had hot coffee‡ and water and chocolate§ served out to the women and children. Elsewhere they gave cigars to the men, sugar to the children.|| Soldiers, at the peril of their lives, saved whole families from the houses on fire.¶

Oh! the kind and gentle soldiers of Germany! They kill without respect of age and sex, they pillage, burn and ruin a whole town; they leave thousands of people at the Abbey and at the Military School almost to die of hunger; during three days they keep in the open air the survivors of Neffe, including invalids and the dying; they take pleasure in inflicting on thousands every kind of agony and torture. And now the "White Book" testifies that "no sort of excess was seen to have been committed by the German soldiers."** It is mockery after cruelty!

We do not mean to say, however, that in our opinion all the officers and soldiers who passed through Dinant are guilty. No! The people of Dinant have themselves done justice to the humanity of some of them. But to dare, as the "White Book" does, to represent the conduct of the troops as having been beyond reproach, arouses the most lively and lawful indignation.

* Appendix 36.

† Appendix 44.

‡ Appendix 5.

§ Appendix 58.

|| Appendix 76.

¶ Appendix 53.

** Appendix 89.

iv.—*The Question of Premeditation.*

One thing, however horrible it may be, seems certain ; it is that *the sack of Dinant was premeditated*. Who can doubt it in view of the following evidence which will one day be published with all the particulars of places and names (both of German officers and of civilians), and to the authenticity of which we bear witness ?

Three days before the catastrophe, at 25 kilometres from Dinant, a colonel of Grenadiers, finding himself at the house of a person who had a second residence at Dinant, begged him not to return there because "*Dinant would be entirely destroyed.*"

On the 22nd of August, in the evening, in a place situated 10 kilometres to the south-east of Dinant, a major of infantry said to a gentleman of position who was dining with the Headquarters Staff :—

"You know Dinant ? It is a beautiful town. *There will not remain of it one stone on another.*"

He also slipped into the conversation "*that the inhabitants of Dinant were very fond of the French.*"

On the 22nd of August, at 9 o'clock in the evening, a captain and three lieutenants were supping at a place situated to the east of Dinant. The captain said to his host : "*To-morrow, Dinant all burnt and all killed.*" And when he was asked the reason, he replied : "*We have lost too many men.*" The captain added : "*You have no near relatives at Dinant ? I should take them and bring them here to put them in safety.*"

On the 21st of August, towards evening, some dragoons and cyclists were billeted in a village situated about 20 kilometres to the south-east of Dinant.

Addressing themselves to the mistress of the house, some soldiers spoke first of Sorinne, then of Dinant.

"*To-morrow, Dinant all kaput, all, all !*" they exclaimed. The woman, shewing them her child, added : "*Not the women, not the children ?*"

"Yes, all, all ; not me, but those," said one of them, indicating his comrades.

In another house of the same locality a soldier said to an old man, whilst offering him a chair : "You good?—" "Yes," answered the old man ; "*we do no harm.*" "Then," added the soldier, "*we good too ; but Dinant, wicked, and to-morrow Dinant all kaput, all, all.*"

On the 23rd of August, at 4.15 in the morning, a first lieutenant of Grenadiers entered the house of a well-known man at Dinant, in company with a non-commissioned officer and a soldier. At the request of the mistress of the house, who knew German, the officer consented not to expel the family from the house, but added : "*You will all the same be obliged to leave, for we have orders to burn the town.*"

It is impossible not to see in evidence, so diverse and so precise, given by people of high rank, a premeditated and well-known resolution of the troops.

* * *

In concluding, a reflection presents itself to our mind. Our work, it will, perhaps, be alleged against us, is very sparing, too sparing in the *mention of people* clearly identified ; it is insufficient also *in the statement of facts*.

Here is our reply :—

Let people put themselves in the position of us Belgians, during the continuance of the occupation.

To implicate people in the facts related would certainly be an imprudent, nay, a dangerous action. Ah ! if we were promised the immunity which belongs of right to every witness who gives evidence with sincerity and with knowledge of the case, then we should not hesitate to identify them at once.

Meanwhile we keep by us the numerous testimonies collected on the morrow of the events, when memory was still vivid.

Do what they will, these overwhelming evidences will appear in full light, under the signatures of most honourable persons.

* * *

One last word, which will give our *conclusion*.

From the examination of the "*White Book*" one undeniable fact stands out conspicuously : *The legend of the Belgian francs-tireurs rests on a simple assertion of the German army, an assertion absolutely impossible to prove.*

Which amounts to saying that *the conduct of the German armies in our districts has been a series of unjustifiable and inhuman actions towards innocent populations.*

Namur,
October 31st, 1915.

† TH. LOUIS,
Bishop of Namur.

B.

LETTER OF THE BISHOP OF LIÉGE TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF OCCUPIED BELGIUM.

Liège,
November 1st, 1915.

To His Excellency the Military Governor-General of occupied Belgium.

EXCELLENCY,

We have just made ourselves acquainted with the documents contained in the "*White Book*," which the German Government has sent to foreign countries, and we feel a painful surprise at finding so many false and calumnious assertions made by it against the Belgian people and against the clergy. The accusation is grave, public, and even official ; it is impossible to leave it without an answer, and the most elementary justice requires that we be permitted to refute it. Meanwhile we unite our protest to that which Mgr. the Bishop of Namur is addressing to Your Excellency.

As regards the provinces of Liège and Limburg, which make up our diocese :—

1. We absolutely deny that the civil population has committed atrocities on the German soldiers ;
2. We deny still more positively that priests have taken part in these pretended atrocities ;
3. We deny that, either at Liège or anywhere else in our diocese, violence was used against the Germans at the time of their expulsion from Belgium.

4. We deny that there has been any organisation of *francs-tireurs* against the invaders, and we believe ourselves even to be right in denying that civilians opposed an armed resistance in any locality whatever.

On the contrary we affirm and we shall prove by numerous incontestable testimonies immediately we are at liberty to do so :—

1. That the war of *francs-tireurs* is an imaginary legend, systematically propagated by the German troops since their entry into Belgium ;

2. That the German troops have burnt thousands of houses without any military necessity ;

3. That they have shot hundreds of civilians, including old men, women and children, without previous inquiry or conviction, and, in every case, without having established their guilt ;

4. That the town of Herve has been burnt ; that the town of Visé has been razed to the ground ; that more than seventy places have been pillaged, burnt and destroyed, in whole or in part, on the stereotyped but unproved accusation : "*Man hat geschossen !*"

5. That thousands of inoffensive civilians have been arrested and transported as prisoners to Germany ;

6. That in the diocese of Liège six priests were shot dead ; that two priests have died as the result of ill-treatment of which they have been the subjects ; that some others have only escaped death by flight or have been victims of degrading brutality, whilst not one of them has been proved to have committed the least misdeed against the Germans ;

7. That several churches have been ravaged and destroyed ; that presbyteries have been pillaged and burnt and numbers of priests arrested as hostages under different pretexts, always perfectly baseless ;

8. That in certain cases priests and civilians have been forced to remain near German batteries engaged with those of the forts, or to march at the head of the troops to serve them as a rampart against enemy bullets.

We shall prove all these facts, and others too, in the most decisive manner on the day when the German Government will consent to the holding of an impartial and searching inquiry.

We deny all value to the inquiry made by the German military authorities of which the "*White Book*" gives us the results, for it is not supported by any guarantee of impartiality, and we are in a position to establish the incorrectness and even the evident falsity of the accusations so far as concerns the diocese of Liège.

Not to be too diffuse, we content ourselves with the following remarks :—

1. As a general rule the "*White Book*" only gives depositions made by German officers and soldiers—that is to say, by those whose interest it is to present the facts in a light unfavourable to the Belgian population. They have, in fact, to justify or excuse the severity of the reprisals made by them.

2. The German tribunal has taken the evidence of some Belgian civilians and priests, but it has not published any in the "*White Book*."

Why? Is it not because these depositions formally contradict those of the Germans? Does not this implicitly shew that these last cannot be sustained in face of the others?

3. The "*White Book*" contains nothing on the subject of the death of the parish priest of *Forêt*, nor of the parish priest of *Haccourt*, nor of the parish priest of *Heure-le-Romain*, nor of the curate of *Olne*, nor of fusillades *en masse* made at certain places such as *Soumagne*, nor of civilians arrested as hostages, but whose bodies were discovered later, etc. Why so many unexplained lacunæ unless from the impossibility of justifying the facts, passed over in silence, although made the subject of a military inquiry?

4. One solitary witness (*App. III*) affirms that at *Blegny* civilians fired on the German troops ; but the Burgomaster Ruwet, after a minute inquiry, affirms, in his report, that no inhabitant of Blegny fired, and that the population would itself have given up the culprit had it been done, such was their fear of provoking reprisals. Nevertheless the Burgomaster, the parish priest and several other persons were shot ; and the village and the beautiful church were destroyed. The parish priest has written the account of the events and of what he suffered up to the day before his death. His last words were an exhortation to his people to keep calm and to support with resignation the terrible trial to which Providence subjected them. The German Commission of Inquiry has had the journal of the parish priest before its eyes and has heard witnesses prove his complete innocence. Why does not the "*White Book*" say one word about it?

Also one single witness (*App. X*) alleges that the Germans were fired upon at *Hockai* ; but the "*White Book*" does not report the formal and repeated denials of the inhabitants who were questioned. The poor parish priest was executed as though he had confessed. Now, from pure weariness, after a night passed in continual anguish, the parish priest had wound up by saying : " If anyone fired, at least no one was killed." Is that an avowal of guilt? Did not the other prisoners protest his innocence? Did he not wish to assume responsibility for the fact in case anyone had been guilty? Did he not adopt an undecided and enigmatic attitude to save the lives of his brother, his sister, and his parishioners, prisoners with him, and threatened like him with death? One cannot tell ; but one thing is certain, that the words of the parish priest were not an avowal and could not be, that the parish priest was incapable of committing the crime of which he was accused, and that he was known for the mildness of his character, the goodness of his heart, and his Germanophil tendencies. Why is the "*White Book*" silent about all this, and why does it say no word of the many interrogatories administered to the inhabitants of Hockai, and especially to the sister of the parish priest?

Stabsarzt Dr. Rehm (*App. IV*) declares that at *Retinne*, on the 6th of August, 1914, the field hospital established there was fired at, and that the authors *must have been civilians since there were no more Belgian soldiers in the village.*

Yet it is certain that fighting was going on near Retinne on this same day, and that, at Retinne itself, Belgian soldiers, hidden in the houses, were taken prisoner. The Commission doubtless neglected to inform itself on this point, or, if it did so, why does it not give the result instead of confining itself to the accusatory deposition?

5. Some soldiers depose that they have seen Belgian civilians commit atrocities, but it is strange that they *never mention the name of the place, the name of the victim, or those of the authors of the crime.* It was, says Richard Weisse, "*in den ersten Tagen des Monats August, es mag auch Mitte August gewesen sein,*" he was somewhere *nahe der belgischen Grenze*, he noticed *in der Nähe einer Häusergruppe*, etc. (*App.* 54).*

How vague all this is, and how it betrays anxiety to render all verification impossible. And what does Weisse discover? A German soldier whose eyes the civilians had just put out. And what did he do to help his unfortunate comrade in arms? Nothing, for he does not even know what became of the mutilated soldier (*Was aus dem misshandelten Manne geworden ist, kann ich nicht sagen*); he does not know, moreover, what became of the authors of the crime, whom, however, he pretends to have attacked; he does not know their names nor that of the victim. In short, everything indicates that the story is nothing but a wicked and infamous lie.

It is the same with Gustave Voigt (*App.* 55), who declares that he saw in a village near Herve five Belgian soldiers who held up their hands to be made prisoners at the moment when, after having hanged and mutilated a German soldier, they were proceeding to do the same to two others. Who will believe an invention as stupid as it is odious? The same man saw a soldier of his company fall wounded. The next day, passing by the same place, he saw the body of the soldier still lying on the road with his eyes put out. Two soldiers belonging to a different company of the same regiment also saw the body of the soldier wounded the day before lying in the same spot. Do the Germans, then, not collect their wounded, but leave them lying on the road? Do they not bury their dead, but leave them exposed upon the line of march of the soldiers to encourage them to fight or perhaps rather to excite their rage against civilians? We shall not take upon ourselves to answer these questions, but we have the right to be astonished that none of the accusers can recall the name of the victim nor the place where he was wounded, mutilated and exposed, nor the peasants who were guilty of the crime and who were conscientiously shot.

What shall we say of the soldier Blankenburg (*App.* 56) who, during a battle in a village to the west of Herve, at the moment when the Germans were occupied in ransacking the houses and arresting the inhabitants, saw little girls of from 8 to 10 years old approach the wounded Germans and cut off their ears?

But enough of these ignominies and calumnies. They bear in themselves the evidence of their own falsity.

Are not the authors of the "White Book" ashamed to publish such documents and to deduce from them conclusions against which good sense revolts, conclusions the odiousness of which we denounce and the *undeniable injustice* of which we brand with indignation?

We know that they have quoted articles from Belgian newspapers which appeared during the early days of the invasion in order to prove the reality of a war of *francs-tireurs*. But we also know that these articles only report rumours and news spread anonymously, and, above all, by German troops as they advanced into the country. Who has not read the story of the famous battle of *Herstal*, where the women threw burning oil on the Germans? Yet this battle is a pure invention; it never took place. Who has not shuddered at reading in the German papers that the population of Liège had burnt a monastery of Jesuits situated in the suburbs and would have burnt the Reverend Fathers and Brothers alive had not the German troops arrived in time to stop the crime? Yet there is no monastery of Jesuit Fathers in the suburbs of Liège, and their three monasteries in Liège itself are perfectly intact. The whole story is absolutely false.

We have heard tell, and we believed for some days, that the parish priest of *Battice* had been surprised with eight men firing from the top of the church tower upon the Germans, that he had been shot as well as his companions, and that the village had been destroyed. The destruction of the village was true, but all the rest was false. The parish priest is alive and protests vigorously against the part attributed to him.

Have we not heard German officers boasting in the same way of having hanged on the church tower the parish priest of B., who, they allege, fired at the Germans? Yet the parish priest of B. is alive and serves his parish; but this is in great part laid waste.

For our part, we have heard three versions of the events of *Hockai*, told by German officers and a general, who stated that they had been there. Yet the three versions are contradictory, and are all three false.

It is not surprising that newspaper correspondents should have collected all these tales, should have developed them and made of them patriotic, but imaginary stories, now used to demonstrate the reality of a war of *francs-tireurs* which we all know never existed.

On the 28th of August, 1914, in a note which we had the honour of personally remitting to His Excellency Field-Marshal von der Goltz, we protested against the summary destruction of villages and towns without any preliminary inquiry. Even then we were able to assert that three places had escaped destruction, thanks to the intervention either of the burgomaster or the parish priest or of some other leading people, who had induced the German leaders, by means of prayers and oburgations, to hold an inquiry before devastations or fusillades were resorted to, and that in each case the inquiry resulted in the discovery that the fatal shot, attributed to a civilian, for which they were about to take vengeance with fire and sword, *had been fired by a German soldier*.

Since then we have learnt of other cases of the same nature. We will only quote that of the town of *Tongres*, where, during one night, twelve persons were killed, where the whole population was violently chased into the open country, where some houses were burnt and all the others pillaged, under the pretext that civilians had fired on the Germans, a pretext the baselessness of which the subsequent inquiry very soon demonstrated.

* Translation: "In the early days of the month of August, it was perhaps indeed in the middle of the month of August; . . . near the Belgian frontier . . . in proximity to a group of houses. . . ."

More than this. We have before us the declaration of a German *Hauptmann*, who testifies that he had a military deserter arrested in a wood where the said soldier was firing day and night. Yet the German troops attributed these shots to *francs-tireurs*, and, under this pretext, pillaged or burnt the neighbouring villages and shot a number of innocent people. Are not all these facts, and others like them, of a nature to make one suspect that we find ourselves in presence of a system invented to give the appearance of legitimate reprisals to the sack of villages and the massacre of the population? The suspicion, which most Belgians already have conceived, has become for many a certainty. They connect with it the declarations made by German soldiers in various places, that they had not done *a quarter of the havoc they had been ordered to do*. They quote also the reply of an officer to the protestations of innocence of the parish priest and inhabitants of F.: "It may be that there is a misunderstanding here, but I have my orders and must execute them." And he had the whole village burnt.

After all the above, the German Government must understand that it cannot much longer refuse the inquiry we ask for: it is the right of every accused person to be heard and to be able to defend himself. In opposing it, Germany makes herself the accomplice of all the calumnies which have been and which continue to be propagated in Germany, against the Belgian people. We have before us two pamphlets: the one, published some time ago, is entitled, *Die Eroberung Belgiens, 1914*; and the other, a recent one, *Die Belgischen Greueltaten gegen die Deutschen im Kriege, 1914 (Amtliche und glaubwürdige Berichte)*.*

The two pamphlets are base and infamous libels, in which the whole, from the first page to the last, is nothing but a tissue of lies and calumnies. It will be sufficient to give one example. At p. 17 of the second pamphlet we read: *Wie aus Lüttich gemeldet wird, sind mehrere hundert Einwohner der Stadt unter Anschuldigung sich an den bestialischen Scheusslichkeiten gegen wehrlose Deutsche beteiligt zu haben, festgenommen worden. Einer vorläufigen Zusammenzählung zufolge beträgt die Zahl der von dem Pöbel ermordeten Deutschen in Lüttich über 150, 3/4 davon Frauen u. Kinder. Die unglücklichen Opfer der Volkswut sind zum Teil so verstümmelt worden, dass ihre Rekognoszierung nur unter grössten Schwierigkeiten möglich war.* (Leipz. Tageblatt).†

As we have already said above, the truth is that *no German has been ill-treated at Liège*.

In the other pamphlet we notice the letter of Stabsarzt Dr. Wille Platz. It commences with these words: *Die Belgier verdienen nicht mehr den Namen einer kultivierten Nation. Sie müssten wie "schädliche Raubtiere ausgerottet werden."*‡ In support of this amiable appreciation he gives some tales not one of which has even the smallest resemblance to truth.

We repeat that Justice demands that we may be able to defend ourselves and that even the honour of Germany is concerned in it.

Whatever the issue of the horrible war which covers Europe with ruins and corpses, the reputation of Germany will not come out of it unblemished if she refuses the inquiry demanded.

Victorious, she will have the shame of having calumniated innocent Belgium, or of having allowed her to be calumniated after having crushed her; vanquished, she will not even have the consolation of saying with Francis I:—

"All is lost, save honour."

Accept, Excellency, the expression of my most profound respect.

(Signed) † M. H. RUTTEN,
Bishop of Liège.

X.

JOINT LETTER OF THE CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF MALINES AND OF THE BISHOPS OF BELGIUM, TO THE CARDINALS AND TO THE BISHOPS OF GERMANY, BAVARIA, AND AUSTRIA.

24th November, 1915.

To Their Eminences the Cardinals and to their Lordships the Bishops of Germany, Bavaria, and Austria.

EMINENCES,
YOUR LORDSHIPS,

As Catholic Bishops, you Bishops of Germany on the one side, we Bishops of Belgium, France and England on the other, have been presenting a disconcerting spectacle to the world.

Scarcely had the German armies trod the soil of our country when the rumour spread amongst you that our civilians were taking part in military operations, that the women of Visé and of Liège had put out the eyes of your soldiers, and that the population at Antwerp and at Brussels had pillaged the property of expelled Germans.

In the early days of August, Dom Ildefons Herwegen, Abbot of Maria-Laach, addressed to the Cardinal Archbishop of Malines a telegram, in which he begged him, for the love of God, to protect the German soldiers against the tortures which our countrymen were supposed to be inflicting on them.

Yet it was notorious that our Government had taken the necessary measures for instructing the citizens in the laws of war; in every commune the arms of the inhabitants had to be deposited at the Town Hall; by means of notices the population was informed that only those citizens who

* Translation: "The Conquest of Belgium, 1914"; "The Belgian atrocities committed on Germans during the War 1914. (Official and trustworthy reports)."

† Translation: "As we learn from Liège, some hundreds of the inhabitants of the town have been arrested on the charge of having taken part in the bestial horrors committed on defenceless Germans. According to a summary statement, the number of Germans assassinated at Liège by the populace amounts to more than 150, of which three-fourths are women and children. The unfortunate victims of popular fury have been in part mutilated to such a degree that their identification has only been made with the greatest difficulty."

‡ Translation: "The Belgians no longer deserve the name of a civilised nation. They ought to be exterminated as noxious wild beasts."

were regularly enrolled under the colours were authorised to bear arms ; and the clergy, zealous to second the efforts of the State, had by word of mouth, by parochial notices, and by placards affixed to the church doors, propagated the instructions decreed by its Government.

Accustomed for a century to a state of peace, we could not bring ourselves to believe that anyone could, in good faith, attribute violent instincts to us. Strong in our rectitude and in the sincerity of our pacific intentions, we only replied to the calumnies about *francs-tireurs* and "eyes put out" by a shrug of the shoulders, persuaded that the truth would speedily prevail.

The Belgian clergy and episcopate were in personal relations with numerous priests, monks, and bishops of Germany and Austria ; the Eucharistic Congress of Cologne in 1909 and of Vienna in 1912 had given them the opportunity of closer knowledge and mutual appreciation. So we had the assurance that the Catholics of nations at war with ours would not lightly judge us ; and not unduly disturbed by the contents of Dom Ildefons' telegram, the Cardinal of Malines confined himself to inviting him to preach gentleness, as we do ; for, added he, they inform us that German troops are shooting innocent Belgian priests.

From the earliest days of August crimes were committed at Battice, at Visé, at Berneau, at Herve, and elsewhere, but we were willing to hope that they would remain isolated acts, and knowing the very close relations of Dom Ildefons with the highest authorities, we had great confidence in the following declaration, which he was good enough to send us on the 11th of August : "I am informed, on the highest authority, that formal orders have been given to the German soldiers to spare the innocent. As to the very deplorable fact that even priests have lost their lives, I must be allowed to call Your Eminence's attention to the fact that in these latter days the habit of priests and monks has become the object of suspicion and scandal, since French spies have made use of the ecclesiastical habit and even of the costume of monks to disguise their hostile intentions."

However, acts of hostility against the innocent population were continued.

On the 18th of August, 1914, Mgr. the Bishop of Liège wrote to the Commandant Bayer, Governor of the town of Liège : "Several villages have been destroyed one after the other ; some leading people, amongst them parish priests, have been shot ; others have been arrested, and all have protested their innocence. I know the priests of my diocese ; I cannot believe that a single one is capable of hostile acts against the German soldiers. I have visited several field hospitals and I have seen the German wounded tended in these with the same devotion as the Belgians. They themselves acknowledge it."*

This letter remained unanswered.

At the beginning of September the Emperor of Germany gave his authority to the calumnious accusations of which our innocent populations were the object. He sent to the President of the United States, Mr. Wilson, this telegram, which has not to this hour, so far as we know, been withdrawn : "The Belgian Government has publicly encouraged the civil population to take part in this war, which it has for a long time prepared carefully. The cruelties committed in the course of this guerilla warfare by women and even by priests, on the doctors and hospital attendants, have been such that my generals have been finally obliged to have recourse to the most severe methods of chastising the guilty and of stopping the bloodthirsty population from continuing these abominable, criminal, and odious acts. Several villages and even the town of Louvain have had to be demolished (except the very beautiful Town Hall) in the interests of our defence and for the protection of my troops. My heart bleeds when I see that such measures have been rendered inevitable, and when I think of the innumerable innocent people who have lost their homes and their goods in consequence of the criminal actions in question."

This telegram was placarded in Belgium by order of the German Government on the 11th of September. On the next day, the 12th of September, Mgr. the Bishop of Namur demanded an audience of the Military Governor of Namur, and protested against the character which His Majesty the Emperor sought to give the Belgian clergy ; he asserted the innocence of all the clergy shot or ill-treated, and he declared that he was himself ready to publish the guilty actions which they should succeed in proving.

The offer of Mgr. the Bishop of Namur was not accepted and his protest had no effect.

The calumny was thus able to do its work freely. The German press fomented it. The organ of the Catholic Centre party, the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, rivalled the chauvinism of the Lutheran press, and on the day when thousands of our fellow citizens, ecclesiastics and laymen, of Visé, Aerschot, Wesemael, Herent, Louvain, and twenty other places, as innocent of acts of war or other cruelties as you and ourselves, were led away prisoners and passed through the railway stations of Aix-la-Chapelle and Cologne, and were, for mortal hours, exposed to the morbid curiosity of the Rhenish metropolis, they had the grief of learning that their brother Catholics assailed them with as many insults as the Lutheran sectaries of Celle, of Soltau, or of Magdeburg.

Not one voice was raised in Germany in defence of the victims.

The legend, which transformed innocent into guilty and crime into an act of justice, was thus accredited, and on the 10th of May, 1915, the "White Book," official organ of the German Empire, dared to adopt and to give these base and odious lies circulation in neutral countries : "Undoubtedly, German wounded have been plundered and done to death, yes, and horribly mutilated by the Belgian population ; and even women and young girls have taken part in these abominations. Wounded Germans have had their eyes put out, their ears, their noses, their fingers and sexual organs cut off or their entrails cut open ; in other cases German soldiers have been poisoned, hung on trees and sprinkled with boiling liquids, sometimes burnt so that they have suffered death in atrocious torture. These bestial doings of the population not only violate the obligations expressly drawn up by the Convention of Geneva concerning the consideration and care due to the wounded of the enemy army, but are contrary to the fundamental principles of the laws of war and of humanity."†

Put yourselves for an instant in our place, dear Brothers in the faith and in the priesthood.

* See in the Annexures the full text of the letter of Mgr. the Bishop of Liège (Annexure A). The protest was renewed on the 21st of August to General von Kolewe, who had become Military Governor of Liège ; then, on the 29th of August, to His Excellency the Baron von der Goltz, Governor-General of the occupied provinces of Belgium, lodged, at that time, in the Episcopal Palace of Liège.

† *Die völkerrechtswidrige Führung des Belgischen Volkskriegs : Denkschrift*, p. 4

We know that these impudent accusations of the Imperial Government are calumnies from beginning to end. We know it and we swear it.

Yet your Government, to justify these accusations, brings evidence which has not been submitted to the test of any cross-examination.

Is it not your duty, not only in charity, but in strict justice, to enlighten yourselves and to enlighten your flocks, and to give us the opportunity of establishing our innocence by judicial means?

You owed us this satisfaction, in the name of Catholic charity, which is above national conflicts; you owe it us to-day, in strict justice, because a Committee, covered at least by your tacit approval, and composed of all whom politics, science and religion count most distinguished in Germany, has endorsed the official accusations, and has entrusted to the pen of a Catholic priest, Professor A. J. Rosenberg of Paderborn, the task of condensing them into a book entitled: *The Lying Accusations of French Catholics against Germany*, and has thus saddled Catholic Germany with the responsibility for the active and public propagation of the calumny against the Belgian people.

When the French book to which the German Catholics oppose theirs, was published, their Eminences Cardinal von Hartmann, Archbishop of Cologne, and Cardinal von Bettinger, Archbishop of Munich, were moved to address to their Emperor a telegram thus conceived: "Revolted by the defamations against the German Fatherland and its glorious army contained in the work *The German War and Catholicism*, we are impelled to express our sorrowful indignation to Your Majesty in the name of the whole German Episcopate. We shall not fail to make our complaint to the Supreme Head of the Church."

Well, Very Reverend Eminences and reverend Colleagues of the German Episcopate, we, Archbishop and Bishops of Belgium, revolted, in our turn, by the calumnies against Belgium and its glorious army contained in the "White Book" of the Empire, and reproduced in the reply of the German Catholics to the French Catholics, feel impelled to express to our King, to our Government, to our army and to our country our sorrowful indignation.

And in order that our protest may not clash with yours fruitlessly, we ask you to consent to aid us in setting up a tribunal of inquiry to hear both sides. You will appoint, by right of your official position, as many members as you may desire and please to select; we will appoint the same number to it, three, for instance, on each side. And we will ask, by common agreement, the Episcopate of a neutral State, Holland, Spain, Switzerland or the United States, to consent to appoint an arbitrator to preside at the meetings of the tribunal.

You have carried your complaints to the Supreme Head of the Church.

It is not just that he should only hear your voice.

You will have the loyalty to help us in making ours heard.

It is our joint duty to put His Holiness in possession of documents which have been tested and on which he may be able to base his judgment.

You are not ignorant of the efforts which we have repeatedly made to obtain from the Power which occupies Belgium the constitution of a tribunal of inquiry.

The Cardinal of Malines twice, in writing, on the 24th of January, 1915, and the 10th of February, 1915; and the Bishop of Namur, by a letter addressed to the Military Governor of his province, on the 10th of April, 1915,* begged for the formation of a tribunal which should be composed of arbitrators, German and Belgian in equal numbers, presided over by a delegate of a neutral State.

Our request met with an obstinate refusal. However, the German authorities were careful to institute inquiries, but these were one-sided, that is to say, of no judicial value.

After having refused the inquiry demanded by the Cardinal of Malines, the German authorities betook themselves to different places where priests had been shot or peaceful citizens massacred or made prisoners, and there, on the deposition of some witnesses, selected at random or deliberately, in presence sometimes of a representative of the local authority, who did not understand the German language, and thus found himself forced to accept and to sign the report of the proceedings on trust, they assumed that they had established conclusions which could afterwards be presented to the public as the result of an impartial examination.

The German inquiry was conducted in November, 1914, at Louvain, under these conditions. It is therefore void of all authority.

Thus it is natural that we turn to you.

You will grant us the Court of Arbitration which the occupying Power has refused us, and you will obtain for us from your Government the public declaration that witnesses may be invited by you and by us to say all they know without fear of reprisals. Before you, under the cloak of your moral authority, they will feel themselves safe and will be encouraged to depose to that which they have seen and heard; the world will have faith in the Episcopate of our united nations; our common control will authenticate the evidence and guarantee the fidelity of the report of the proceedings. The inquiry thus constituted will secure belief.

We demand this inquiry, Eminences and venerable Colleagues, before all to vindicate the honour of the Belgian people. It has been besmirched by calumnies on the part of your people and their highest representatives. And you know, as we do, the adage of moral, humane, Christian and Catholic Theology: without restitution, no pardon; *non remittitur peccatum, nisi restituatur ablatum*.

Your people, through the organs of their political power and their highest moral authorities, have accused our fellow citizens of having given themselves up to atrocities and horrors against the wounded Germans, of which the "White Book" and the above-mentioned manifesto of Catholics relate the details; we meet all these accusations by a formal denial, and we demand the opportunity of proving the legitimacy of our denial.

In return, in order to justify the atrocities committed in Belgium by the German army, the political Power, by the very title of the "White Book," *Die völkerrechtswidrige Führung des Belgischen Volkskriegs* (The Civilian War waged in Belgium in defiance of International Law), and the hundred Catholic signatures of the work *The German War and Catholicism: German reply to French attacks*, affirm that the German army in Belgium was in a position of legitimate defence against a perfidious organisation of *francs-tireurs*.

* See Annexure B.

We affirm that there was in no part of Belgium any organisation of *francs-tireurs*, and we claim, in the name of our calumniated national honour, the right to prove the truth of our affirmation.

You will call before the impartial tribunal of inquiry whom you will. We shall invite to appear there all the priests of parishes where civilians, priests, ecclesiastics or laymen, were massacred or threatened with death to the cry of : *Man hat geschossen* (they fired on us) ; and we shall invite all these priests to sign, if you wish it, their depositions on oath, and then, unless you maintain that all the Belgian clergy is perjured, you will have duly to accept the conclusions of this solemn and decisive inquiry, and the civilised world will not be able to refuse to do likewise.

But we add, Eminences and reverend Colleagues, that you have the same interest as ourselves in the constitution of a tribunal of honour.

For we, supported by direct experience, know and affirm that the German army gave itself up, in Belgium, in a hundred different spots, to pillage, to arson, to imprisonments, to massacres and to sacrileges, contrary to all justice and to every sentiment of humanity.

We affirm this especially in reference to the communes whose names are mentioned in our Pastoral Letters and in the two notes addressed by the Bishops of Namur and Liège respectively, on the 31st of October and the 1st of November, 1915, to His Holiness Pope Benedict XV, to His Excellency the Nuncio at Brussels, and to the Ministers or Representatives of neutral countries resident at Brussels.*

Fifty innocent priests and thousands of innocent faithful were put to death, hundreds of others, whose lives were preserved by circumstances independent of the will of their persecutors, were put in danger of death ; thousands of innocent people were, without any previous conviction, made prisoners, many of them underwent months of detention, and when they were released the minute interrogatories to which they were submitted had not brought any fault home to them.

These crimes cry to heaven for vengeance.

If, in making these denunciations, we calumniate the German army, or if the military authorities have had good cause for commanding or permitting these acts, which we call criminal, the honour and national interest of Germany require that we be confuted. So long as German justice hides itself we retain the right and the duty of denouncing what in conscience we consider an outrage on justice and our honour.

The Chancellor of the German Empire, at the session of the 4th of August, declared that the invasion of Luxemburg and of Belgium was a *violation of international law* ; he recognised that " in disregarding the protests of the Governments of Luxemburg and Belgium he was committing an *injustice* which he promised to remedy ; " and the Sovereign Pontiff, making an intentional allusion to Belgium, as we know, because he condescended to have the Minister van den Heuvel so informed by His Eminence Cardinal Gasparri, Secretary of State, pronounced this irrevocable judgment in his Consistorial Allocution of the 22nd of January, 1915 : " The Roman Pontiff, whom God has established as Sovereign Interpreter and Avenger of the eternal law, is in duty bound to proclaim before all that *no one may, for any reason whatsoever, violate Justice.*"

Since then, however, politicians and casuists have tried to evade or weaken these decisive words. In their reply to the French Catholics the German Catholics give themselves up to the same paltry subtleties and attempt to corroborate them by a fact. They have at their disposal two witnesses, the one anonymous, who saw, he says, on the 28th of July, French officers in conversation with Belgian officers on the Boulevard Anspach at Brussels ; the other, a certain Gustave Lochard of Rimogne, who deposes that " two Regiments of French Dragoons, the 28th and 30th, and a battery crossed the Belgian frontier on the evening of the 31st of July, 1914, and remained exclusively on Belgian territory during the whole of the following week."

Yet the Belgian Government maintains " that before the declaration of war no French troop, however small, had penetrated into Belgium." And it adds, " No honest evidence can be brought to contradict this affirmation."

The Government of our King therefore accuses the assertion of the German Catholics of error.

Here we have a question of the first importance, both political and moral, upon which we ought to enlighten the public conscience.

If, however, you declined the examination of this general question, we should ask you at least to criticise the evidence on which the German Catholics rely in deciding against us. The deposition of this Gustave Lochard turns upon facts easy to check. The German Catholics will be anxious to free themselves from the reproach of error, and will make it a duty of conscience to retract, if they have allowed themselves to be deceived to our detriment.†

We recognise that you are loth to believe that regiments, whose discipline, honesty and religious faith are, as you say, known to you, could give themselves up to the inhuman acts with which we reproach them. You wish to persuade yourselves that it was not so because it could not be so. And, constrained by the evidence, we reply to you that it could be because it is.

In face of the fact no previous opinion holds good.

There is for you, as for us, only one issue : the verification of the facts by a commission whose impartiality is apparent to and indisputable by all.

We easily understand your disposition of mind.

We also respect, pray believe it, the spirit of discipline, of industry, and of faith, of which we have so often seen the proofs and received the evidence, amongst your compatriots. Very numerous are the Belgians who avow to-day the bitterness of their disappointment. But they have lived through the sinister events of August and September. Truth has triumphed over their incredulity. The facts can no longer be denied. Belgium has been martyred.

When strangers from neutral countries—Americans, Dutch, Swiss, Spaniards—question us about the manner in which the German war was carried on, and when we describe to them certain scenes, the horror of which we have had, in spite of ourselves, to credit, we soften the impression of them, so much do we feel that the naked truth passes the limit of probability.

* See Annexure C.

† The documents published, pp. 317 *et seq.*, shew conclusively that the witness, whose name is *Cochard*, and not *Lochard*, was mistaken (*Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry*).

Yet when, in presence of the whole truth, you have been able to analyse the causes, some remote, others immediate, of what one of your generals, in presence of the ruins of the small village of Schaffen-lez-Diest, and of the martyrdom of the pastor of the parish, called "a tragic mistake;" when you have been told of the influences under which your soldiers were at the moment of their entry into Belgium and in the intoxication of their first successes, the improbability of the truth will appear less glaring to you, as now to us.

Above all, Eminences and reverend Colleagues, do not allow yourselves to be restrained by the empty pretext that an inquiry would be premature to-day.

We might, strictly speaking, ourselves say so, because the inquiry would be held at the present hour under conditions unfavourable for us. Our population has been, in fact, so profoundly terrorised, and the prospect of reprisals is still so dark for them, that the witnesses we should call before a tribunal in part German will hardly dare to speak the truth to the full.

But there are decisive reasons against all dilatory proceedings.

The first, which will appeal to you most strongly, is that we are the weak and you are the strong. You would not wish to abuse your strength against us.

Public opinion inclines, in general, to him who is the first to lay hold of it.

Yet, whilst you have full liberty to inundate neutral countries with your publications, we are imprisoned and reduced to silence. Scarcely are we allowed to raise our voices in our churches; sermons there are reported, that is to say, travestied by hired spies; conscientious protests are described as revolt against the public Powers; our writings are seized at the frontiers as contraband articles. You are then alone in enjoying liberty of speech and of the pen and, if you will, in the spirit of charity and justice, procure a portion of that liberty for the accused Belgians, and give them the opportunity of defending themselves, it is your duty to come at the earliest moment to protect them. The old judicial adage "*Audiat et altera pars*" stands written, they say, on the pediment of many German tribunals. In any case, with you as with us, it prescribes the law for the judgments of episcopal courts, and with you also, undoubtedly, as with us, it circulates in popular language under this form of imagery: He who only hears one bell, only hears one sound.

You will say, perhaps: It is passed, forget it. Instead of throwing oil on the fire, apply yourselves rather to forgiving, and unite your efforts to those of the occupying Power, which only seeks to bind up the wounds of the unhappy Belgian people.

Oh, Eminences and dear Colleagues, do not add irony to injustice.

Have not we suffered enough? Have we not been, are we not still, cruelly tortured enough?

It is passed, you say, be resigned, forget.

The past! but all the wounds are bleeding! There is no honest heart that does not swell with indignation. Whilst we hear our Government say in the face of the world: "Doubly guilty is he who, after having violated the rights of another, impudently attempts to justify himself by imputing to his victim faults that he has never committed," our humble folk do violence to themselves to restrain their curses. Only yesterday a countryman of the suburbs of Malines learnt that his son had succumbed on the field of battle. A priest consoled him. And the worthy man answered: "Oh! him I give to my country. But my eldest they took from me, the devils, and basely struck him down in a ditch!"

How can we obtain from these unfortunate people, who have known every torture, a sincere word of resignation or of pardon, so long as those, who have made them suffer, refuse them any acknowledgment, any word of repentance, any promise of reparation?

Germany cannot restore to us the blood she has shed or the innocent lives which her armies have cut off; but she has it in her power to restore to the Belgian people their honour which she has violated or allowed to be violated.

This restoration we demand of you, who are, in the first degree, the representatives of Christian morality in the Church of Germany.

This hatred, which injustice, real or fancied, accumulates in so many hearts made to love one another, is something more profoundly sad than political divisions and material misfortunes. Pastors of our peoples, is it not on us that the mission devolves of facilitating the removal of evil feelings, and of re-establishing the union in charity of all the children of the great Catholic family on the basis of that justice which has been so violently undermined?

The occupying Power speaks and writes, in fact, of healing our wounds.

But in the tribunals of human justice men judge the intention by the action.

All that we poor Belgians, who submit, for the time being, to the domination of the Empire know, is that the Power, which is bound in honour to govern us according to international law as codified in the Hague Convention, fails to meet its engagements.

We do not speak of individual abuses committed against private persons or communes, the nature of which could only be established by an impartial investigation after the war; at this moment we only take note of the acts of the Government as set forth in official documents emanating from it, posted by it on the walls of our towns, and involving in consequence its direct responsibility without possible dispute.

Now the infractions of the Hague Convention, since the date of the occupation of our provinces, are numerous and flagrant. We arrange them here under certain heads, and we will furnish the proofs of our allegations in an Annexure.* These are the principal heads:—

Collective punishments inflicted by reason of individual acts, contrary to Article 50 of the Hague Convention;

Forced labour for the enemy, contrary to Article 52;

New taxes, in violation of Articles 48, 49 and 52;

Abuse of requisitions in kind, in violation of Article 52.

Disregard of laws in force in the country, contrary to Article 43.

These violations of International Law, which aggravate our unhappy lot and accumulate feelings of revolt and hate in hearts usually pacific and charitable, could not have gone on, if those who commit them had not felt themselves supported, if not by the positive approval, at least by the complaisant silence of all who mould public opinion in their own country.

With confidence, then, we renew our appeal to your charity ; we are the weak, you are the strong ; come and judge if it is yet lawful for you not to help us at all.

There are, moreover, general reasons for the constitution of a Commission of Inquiry by the members of the Catholic Episcopate.

We have already dwelt on the disconcerting spectacle that our divisions give to the world ; it is an occasion of scandal and rouses blasphemous thoughts.

Our populations do not understand how you can be ignorant of the two-fold flagrant iniquity that has overwhelmed Belgium—the violation of our neutrality and the inhuman conduct of your soldiers— or how, knowing it, you have not raised your voices to condemn it and to dissociate yourselves from it.

On the other hand, in return, *your* populations, Protestant and Catholic, are naturally scandalised at the part ascribed by your press to the Belgian clergy and to a nation, over which, for thirty years, a Government notoriously Catholic has presided. "Take care ;" said Mgr. the Bishop of Hildesheim to his clergy, as early as the date of the 21st of September, 1914, "these charges which the press circulates about the priests, the monks, and the nuns of Catholic nations, are digging a ditch between the Catholics and Protestants of German soil, and are imperilling the religious future of the German Empire."* The campaign of calumnies against our clergy and our people has not at all abated. The deputy of the Centre, Erzberger, seems to have taken on himself the office of fomenting it. Even in Belgium, in the Cathedral of Antwerp, on the 16th Sunday after Pentecost, one of your priests, Heinrich Mohr, dared to say, from the pulpit of truth, to the Catholic soldiers of your army : "Official documents have told us how the Belgians have hanged German soldiers on trees, have sprinkled them with boiling liquids, and have burnt them alive."†

There is only one means of putting an end to these scandals, which is for the religious authorities to bring the really guilty into the full light of truth and publicly condemn them.

There is another subject of scandal to honest people, believers or unbelievers ; this is the mania for putting in the foreground the calculation of advantages and disadvantages to Catholic interests of the success either of the Triple Alliance or the Quadruple Entente. Professor Schrörs, of the University of Bonn,‡ was the first, to our knowledge, to devote his leisure to these irritating calculations.

The religious results of the war are the secret of God and none of us is in the divine confidence.

But there is one question above all this, a question of morality, of right, and of honour.

"Seek first," says Our Lord in His Holy Gospel, "the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things shall be added unto you."

Do what is right, come what may !

So at the present hour, we Bishops have a moral and consequently religious duty which surpasses all others—to seek out and proclaim the truth.

Has not Christ, whose disciples and whose ministers we have the signal honour of being, said : "My social mission is to bear witness to the truth ?" *Ego ad hoc veni in mundum ut testimonium perhibeam veritati.*§

On the solemn day of our episcopal consecration, we promised to God and the Catholic Church never to desert the truth, nor to yield either to ambition or fear, when it is a question of proving that we love it : "*Veritatem diligat, neque eam unquam deserat, aut laudibus aut timore superatus.*"||

We have then, by virtue of our vocation, a common mission and a ground of agreement. Confusion reigns in the souls of men ; what some call light, others call darkness ; what is good for some is bad for others. The impartial tribunal of inquiry, to which we have the honour of inviting your delegates, will, we venture to hope, help to dissipate more than one uncertainty : "*Non ponat lucem tenebras, nec tenebras lucem ; non dicat malum bonum, nec bonum malum.*"

With all the ardour of his prayers, our Holy Father the Pope calls for peace ; in the letter which he deigned to address to you at Fulda, on the occasion of your last meeting, he urged you, he urges us all, to desire it with him. But he only desires it if founded on the respect of right and of the dignity of peoples : *Dum votis omnibus pacem expetimus, atque eam quidem pacem, quæ et justitiæ sit opus et populorum congruat dignitati.* . . . ¶

*Denn es handelt sich bei solchen Gerüchten nicht nur um die Ehre von Konfraters, sondern auch um Gefährdung heiliger Interessen des Katholischen Volkes in Deutschland. Sind doch solche Gerüchte dazu angetan, das friedliche Verhältnis unter den Angehörigen der verschiedenen Konfessionen langsam zu untergraben, Misstrauen gegen den Klerus überhaupt hervorzurufen und unter den in der Diaspora lebenden Katholiken tiefe Verstimmung und Verwirrung anzurichten. Daher ist es für den Diasporapfarrer doppelt notwendig, gegenüber den in seiner Gemeinde etwa umlaufenden Verdächtigungen des Klerus besonders wachsam zu sein.

DR. ADOLFF BERTRAM, Bischof von Hildesheim : " Wachsamkeit gegenüber Verdächtigungen des Klerus."

† "Man hat in den amtlichen Berichten entsetzliche Dinge gelesen. . . . Wie die Belgier deutsche Soldaten an den Bäumen aufhängen, mit heissem Teer verbrühten und lebendig anzündeten," Feldpredigt auf den 16n Sonntag nach Pfingsten von Heinrich Mohr. The sermon has been published in the periodical : *Die Stimme der Heimat*, No. 34 ; Freiburg in Br. 1915, Herder.

‡ "Der Krieg und der Katholizismus," von DR. HEINRICH SCHRÖRS, Professor der katholischen Theologie an der Universität in Bonn.

§ John xviii., 37.

|| "Pontificale Romanum" : *de consecratione electi in episcopum.*

¶ *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*, Vol. VII., die 6 Octobris, 1915.

We shall respond then to the wish of our common Father, by working in concert to make the truth shine forth and triumph; the truth, on which justice, the honour of nations, and finally peace ought to be founded.

Accept, Eminences and Reverend Colleagues, the expression of our respectful sentiments and of fraternal devotion

D. J. MERCIER,
Archbishop of Malines;

ANTOINE,
*Bishop of Ghent; **

GUSTAVE J.,
*Bishop of Bruges; **

THOMAS LOUIS,
Bishop of Namur;

MARTIN HUBERT,
Bishop of Liège;

AMÉDÉE CROOY,
Bishop-elect of Tournai.

ANNEXURE A.

LETTER ADDRESSED BY MGR. THE BISHOP OF LIÉGE TO THE COMMANDANT BAYER, GOVERNOR OF LIÉGE, ON THE DATE OF AUGUST 18TH, 1914.

MONSIEUR LE COMMANDANT,

I address myself to your heart, as a man and a Christian, and I beg of you to put a stop to the executions and reprisals. I have learnt, in swift succession, that several villages have been destroyed, that notable persons, including parish priests, have been shot, that others have been arrested, and that all have protested their innocence. From what I know of the priests of my diocese I cannot believe that a single one of them could have been guilty of hostile acts against the German soldiers. I have visited some field hospitals and I have seen there the wounded Germans tended with the same zeal as the Belgians. They themselves acknowledge it. If soldiers of the Belgian army placed at the outposts fired on the Germans on their entry into Belgium, can that be made a crime of the civil population? And if even some civilians aided the soldiers in repulsing the German scouts, can the entire population, including women, children and priests, be held responsible for it? But I do not wish to discuss past actions, I ask of you only, in the name of humanity and of God, to stop reprisals against the inoffensive population. These reprisals can have no longer any useful object, but will drive the population to despair.

I shall be happy to have the opportunity of discussing this subject with you, for I am confident that you wish, as I do, to lighten the evils of war instead of aggravating them.

At the last moment I learn that the parish priest of R—— has been arrested and conducted to the Chartreuse. I know not of what he is accused, but I do know that he is incapable of committing an act of hostility against your soldiers: he is a good priest, mild and charitable. I answer for him and I beg you to restore him to his parish.

Accept, &c.

(Signed) M. H. RUTTEN,
Bishop of Liège.

This letter remained unanswered, but the same protest was renewed on the 21st of August, to General von Kolve, who had meantime become Military Governor of Liège.

The same protests, vigorously developed and energetically emphasized, were renewed on the 29th of August, in an interview with the Governor-General of occupied Belgium, Baron von der Goltz Pasha, then lodged at the episcopal palace with his staff.

(Signed) M. H. RUTTEN,
Bishop of Liège.

* The despatch of a joint letter of the Belgian Episcopate to the German Episcopate was decided upon by all the Belgian Bishops. All were informed of the tenour of the present letter and agreed to it; but in consequence of the difficulties of communicating with the Bishops of Ghent and Bruges, the final text of the letter could not be submitted to them or receive their signature.

- ANNEXURE B.

This Annexure contains :—

- (a) A letter of His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, Archbishop of Malines, to the Kreischef of the district of Malines, dated January 24th, 1915 ;
- (b) A communication of His Eminence the Cardinal of Malines transmitted to the General Government by the medium of Adjutant von Flemming, under date of February 10th, 1915.
- (c) A letter of Mgr. the Bishop of Namur to the Military Governor of Namur, under date of April 10th, 1915 ;
- (d) A note relative to a partial inquiry made by an Austrian priest, delegate of the *Wiener Priesterverein* ;
- (e) The correspondence of the Cardinal of Malines with His Excellency the German Governor-General on the subject of the outrages on nuns.

In his pastoral letter of Christmas, 1914, the Cardinal of Malines had published the names of innocent priests who had been put to death by the German troops.

Count von Wengersky, Kreischef of the district of Malines, wrote to the Cardinal, on the 20th of January, the following letter :—

DER KREISCHEF.
Tgb. No. 268/II.

Mecheln, den 20-1-1915.

*An Seine Eminenz den Kardinal Erzbischof von Mecheln.
Nach einer Zeitungsnotiz sollen in dem Bistum Mecheln mehrere Priester unschuldig getötet worden sein.
Um eine Nachforschung einleiten zu können bitte ich Euer Eminenz um gefällige Mitteilung, ob und welche Priester des Bistums Mecheln unschuldig getötet worden sind.
Es wäre mir sehr erwünscht zu erfahren, welche Umstände hierzu geführt haben, welche Truppen eventuell in Betracht kommen, und an welchen Tagen dieses geschehen ist.*

Der Kreischef,
(Gez.) WENGERSKY, Oberst.

The Cardinal replied in these terms to Count von Wengersky :—

ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE, MALINES.

24th January, 1915.

M. LE KREISCHEF,

I have the honour of acknowledging the receipt of the letter 268/II, dated January 20th, which you have been pleased to forward to me.

The names of the priests and monks of the diocese of Malines who, to my knowledge, have been put to death by the German troops, are the following : Dupierreux, of the Society of Jesus ; Brother Sebastien Allard, of the Congregation of Josephites ; Brother Candide, of the Congregation of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mercy ; Father Vincent, Conventual ; Carette, Professor ; Lombaert, Goris, De Clerck, Dergent, Wouters, Van Bladel, parish priests.

At Christmas I did not yet know with certainty what fate had befallen the parish priest of Hérent. Since then his body has been recovered at Louvain and identified.

Other figures quoted in my pastoral letter could to-day be increased ; thus for Aerschot I have given the number of 91 victims, but the total number of bodies of inhabitants of Aerschot disinterred rose some days ago to the figure of 143. But the moment has not yet come to dwell on these particular facts. They will find a place in the inquiry which you allow me to hope for.

It will be to me a consolation to see full light thrown upon the events which I have been bound to recall in my pastoral letter, and upon others of the same nature.

But it is essential that the results of this inquiry should proclaim themselves to all with indisputable authority.

To this end I have the honour to propose to you, Monsieur le Comte, and to propose, by your kind intervention, to the German authorities, that the Commission of Inquiry may be composed in equal parts of German delegates and of Belgian magistrates nominated by the head of our magistracy, and presided over by the representative of a neutral country. I am inclined to think that His Excellency the Minister of the United States would not refuse to accept this presidency or to confide it to a delegate chosen by him.

Accept, I pray you, M. le Kreischef, the assurance of my high regard.

(Signed) D. J., CARDINAL MERCIER,
Archbishop of Malines.

To the Count von Wengersky,
Kreischef,
Malines.

This request remained unanswered.

(b) On the 10th of February, 1915, Adjutant von Flemming presented himself in the name of the Kreischef at the Archbishop of Malines' Palace for the purpose of renewing verbally to the Cardinal the interrogatory to which the latter had already replied in writing in his letter of the 24th of January. The Cardinal pointed out to the Adjutant that questions of this nature ought to be formulated and answered in writing. He drew up consequently in the following terms the questions of the Kreischef and the answers they elicited, and the document was signed afterwards by the Adjutant and the Cardinal of Malines.

ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE,
MALINES.

The Adjutant von Flemming asks me in the name of the General Government :—

1. What are the communes where priests have been shot?
2. What are the troops who put them to death and on what days?
3. If the Bishop of the diocese maintains that these priests were innocent?

1. The names of these communes have already been printed in my pastoral letter of Christmas, 1914, on page 65.

2. The German Headquarters Staff is better informed than anyone as to what troops occupied a commune on any given date. The people easily recognise the German uniform, but do not distinguish for the most part the different regiments composing the army.

3. My personal and reasoned conviction is that the priests whose names I have given were innocent; but, in justice, it is not for us to establish their innocence. It is for the military authorities who have punished them to prove their guilt.

Witnesses called to give evidence before a one-sided Commission would, generally speaking, be afraid to tell the whole truth. Only on condition of a mixed Commission being formed to collect it and to guarantee its impartiality and correctness will the truth be fully known and obtain universal acceptance.

Therefore I can only renew, for the third time,* my proposal to entrust to a mixed Commission, composed in part of German magistrates and in part of Belgian magistrates, the task of throwing full light on the facts concerning which the General Government proposes to make an inquiry. In order to give the results of the inquiry all the desirable authority, the tribunal ought to be presided over by a delegate of a neutral State.

Given at Malines,

February 10th, 1915.

(Signed) D. J., CARDINAL MERCIER,
Archbishop of Malines.

(Signed) von FLEMMING,

Rittmeister und Adjutant des Kreischefs in Mecheln.

This request remained unanswered.

(c) On the occasion of the publication of a confidential letter of the Prussian Ministry of War to the Grand Chancellor, Mgr. the Bishop of Namur published, on the 10th of April, 1915, a reply to this document.

Yet the Military Governor of Namur disputed—without specifying anything—the assertions contained in the reply of the Bishop.

The latter maintained his assertions and added: "In face of the difference of views which divide us there is only one means of enlightening the eyes of all as to the facts. This is to entrust the examination to the Commission of Inquiry proposed by me. I am confident that Your Excellency will approve of it and recommend the project to the Governor-General."

(Signed) T. L., Bishop of Namur.

The proposal of the Bishop of Namur remained unanswered.

(d) A priest accredited by His Eminence Cardinal Piffl, Prince Archbishop of Vienna, made an inquiry in Belgium on behalf of the *Wiener Priesterverein*. The results of this partial inquiry were published in the *Tijd*, of Amsterdam, and in the *Politiken*, of Copenhagen. They are overwhelming against the German Military authorities. But, if we are rightly informed, the German and Austrian newspapers refrained from bringing them to the knowledge of their readers.

(e) Before concluding this Appendix relating to inquiries, we have to make a correction.

In their reply to the French Catholics, the German Catholics speak of outrages upon nuns, and write: "The German Governor-General in Belgium addressed himself to the Belgian Bishops on this subject. . . . The Archbishop of Malines stated that he could not furnish any precise information of any case whatever of the rape of nuns in his diocese."

This last phrase is materially exact, but leads the inattentive reader into error. I wrote, in fact, to the Governor General that I could not furnish him with any precise information because my conscience forbade me to deliver to any tribunal whatever the alas! very precise information which I possess. Outrages upon nuns have been committed. I believe them to have been, happily, not very numerous, but, to my knowledge, there were some.

Since the Governor-General has thought himself entitled to give to the public an extract of the reply which I had the honour of addressing to him on this delicate subject, it is my duty to reproduce here the whole text of our correspondence.

* The proposal had been made the first time in writing on the 24th of January and repeated verbally on the 8th of February by Mgr. Van Roey, Vicar General, who had been summoned to the Kommandantur of Malines.

This is the letter written to me on the 30th of March, 1915, by the Governor-General :—

DER GENERAL GOUVERNEUR
IN BELGIEN.

Brüssel, den 30. März 1915.

EUERE EMINENZ,

In der ausländischen Presse ist in letzter Zeit wiederholt, neben einer Reihe anderer Anschuldigungen, die zum grössten Teil bereits als unberechtigt nachgewiesen sind, der schwere Vorwurf erhoben worden, deutsche Soldaten seien bei dem Durchmarsch in Belgien nicht davor zurückgeschreckt sich an belgischen Klosterfrauen zu vergreifen.

Es erübrigt sich darauf hinzuweisen, dass derartige Vergehungen, falls sie sich als wahr herausstellen sollten, meiner und der deutschen Regierung schärfster Missbilligung sicher sind. Andererseits ist es eine Forderung der Billigkeit, als unwahr erweisene Ansechuldigungen gebührend zurückzuweisen.

Ich darf annehmen, dass die Aufdeckung der vollen Wahrheit sowohl dem Gerechtigkeitsgefühl, wie den Interessen der katholischen Kirche in gleicher Weise entspricht, und ich glaube daher, auf Euer Eminenz gütige Unterstützung rechnen zu können, wenn ich bitte, mir in meinen Bemühungen um Klarlegung der Tatsachen behilflich zu sein.

Das Material, das Euere Eminenz über eventuelle Fälle von Schändung von Klosterfrauen in der dortigen Diözese vorlegen wollen, würde mich in Stand setzen, die nach Lage der Sache gebotenen weiteren Schritte zu tun.

Mit dem Ausdruck meiner vorzüglichsten Hochachtung habe ich die Ehre zu sein.

Euerer Eminenz sehr ergebener,
(Gez.) FHR VON BISSING.

An Seine Eminenz
den Herrn Erzbischof von Mecheln in
MECHELN.

Here is our reply :—

ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE,
MALINES.

Malines,
The 16th of April, 1915.

MONSIEUR LE GOUVERNEUR GÉNÉRAL,

I have duly received the letter No. 1243 which Your Excellency has done me the honour of addressing to me and I regret having been hindered from replying to it sooner.

Rumours circulate, in fact, accepted by certain newspapers, denied by others, on the subject of outrages suffered by Belgian nuns at the hands of German soldiers, and I agree with Your Excellency in protesting against those who lightly without proof publicly spread or maintain such odious accusations.

But when Your Excellency asks me to assist you in throwing light on the truth or falsehood of these charges, I find myself under the necessity of asking you a preliminary question.

Has the civil authority the right to make an inquiry into facts of so delicate a nature ?

Whom will they question ?

The confessor ? The doctor ? They are bound by professional secrecy.

The Superiors ? Do they know all the truth ? If they know it from having learnt it under the seal of secrecy, have they the right to speak ?

Will they dare ask the interested parties ? Would that not be cruel ? Would they try to make witnesses speak, at the risk of exposing the unhappy victims of violence, to the shame of dishonour before public opinion.

As regards myself, I should not dare to submit anyone to an interrogatory on a subject so delicate, and the confidences which have been made spontaneously, or which might be made on this matter, my conscience forbids me to disclose to others.

Our duty, Excellency, is by all the means in our power, to prevent the public from indulging in these capricious and unhealthy allegations, and I shall applaud with all my heart the repression which justice will exercise on those who, whether deliberately or from an unpardonable levity, invent and propagate them. But I consider that we cannot go farther without encroaching upon the rights of conscience and violating its liberty.

Accept, M. le Gouverneur Général, the renewed assurance of my very high regard.

(Signed) D.J., CARDINAL MERCIER,
Archbishop of Malines.

To His Excellency M. le Baron von Bissing, Gouverneur Général.

Brussels.

ANNEXURE C.

We know and we assert that the German army has given itself up in Belgium in a hundred different places to pillage, arson, imprisonments, massacres and sacrileges, contrary to all justice and all sentiments of humanity.

There are parts of Hainault and the two Flanders which are still in the district of military dépôts, and the disasters of which are consequently less known to us. But here is an approximate list of the places referred to in our protest :—

1. *Diocese of Namur* : Provinces of Namur and Luxemburg :—

Tamines, Surice, Spontin, Namur, Ethe, Gomery, Latour, Aische-en-Refail, Alle, Arsimont, Auvelais, Bonnines, Bourseigne-Neuve, Bouge, Daussois, Dourbes, Ermeton-sur-Biert, Evrehailles, Felenne, Fosses, Franchimont, Franc-Waret, Frasné, Gelinne, Gelbressée, Hansinelle, Hanzinne, Hautbois, Hastière, Hermeton-sur-Meuse, Hingeon, Houdrémont, Jemeppe-sur-Sambre, Lisogne, Louette-Saint-Pierre, Mariembourg, Mettet, Monceau, Morville, Onhay, Oret, Petigny, Romedenne, Somme-Leuze, Somzée, Stave, Temploux, Villers-en-Fagne, Wartet, Waulsort, Willersée, Yvoir, Anloy, Assenois, Baranzy, Bertrix, Briscot, Etalle, Framont, Frênes-Opont, Freylange, Glaumont, Glaireuse, Hamipré, Herbeumont, Izel, Jéhonville, Maissin, Manhay, Musson, Mussy-la-Ville, Neufchâteau, Pin, Saint-Léger, etc., etc.

Thibessart, Biesme, Porcheresse, Graide, Nothomb, Rulles, Rosière-la-Grande, Bovigny, Gouvry, Champion, Jamoigne, Silenrieux, Les Bulles, Tintigny, Ansart, Rossignol, Sorinne, Bièvre, Behême, Légglise, Laneffe, Frénois, Villers-devant-Orval, Couvin, Houdemont, Chiny, Anthée, Ychippe, Conneux, Aye, Evelette, Florenville, Hollogne, Le Roux, Leuze, Marche, Sainte-Marie, Saint-Vincent.

Andenne, Dinant.

2. *Diocese of Liège* : Provinces of Liège and Limburg :—

Battice, Herve, Visé, Mouland, Hermée, Hallembaye, Louveigné, Lincé, Poulseur, Soumagne, Fecher, Melin, Julémont, Barchon, Lummen, Haelen, Lanaeken.

3. *Diocese of Malines* : Provinces of Brabant and Antwerp :—

Haekendover, Autgaerden, Grimde, Hougaerde, Cumptich, Hautem-Sainte-Marguerite, Vissenaeken, Bunsbeek, Lubbeek-Saint-Bernard, Wever, Attenrode, Cappellen (Glabbeek), Cortryck-Dutzel, Glabbeek, Pellenberg, Neer-Linter, Budingen, Heelenbosch, Orsmael-Gussenhoven, Corbeek-Loo, Lovenjoul, Roosbeek, Schaffen, Molenstede, Wersbeek, Aerschot, Rillaer, Gelrode, Wesemael, Hersselt, Rethy, Haecht, Rotselaer, Wackerzeel, Werchter, Tremeloo, Thildonck, Wespelaer, Boortmeerbeek, Rymenam, Hever, Louvain, Heverlé, Hérent, Berg, Campenhout, Bueken, Neder-Ockerzeel, Cortenberg, Delle, Boisschot, Goor, Heyst-op-den-Berg, Beersel, Putte, Schrieck, Malines, Bonheyden, Wavre-Notre-Dame, Wavre-Sainte-Catherine, Waelhem, Leest, Hombeek, Sempst, Laer, Hofstade, Muysen, Schiplaeken, Konings-Hoyckt, Kessel, Lierre, Duffel, Blaesveld, Perck, Peuthy, Hautem, Elewytt, Weerde, Eppegghem, Pont-Brûlé, Grimberghen, Londerzeel, Meysse, Humbeek, Nieuwenrode, Beyghem, Wolverthem, Cappelle-au-Bois, Linsmeau, Wavre, Mousty.

4. *Diocese of Ghent* : Eastern Flanders :—

Saint-Gilles, Lebbeke, Termonde.

5. *Diocese of Tournai* : Province of Hainault :—

Péronne.

ANNEXURE D.

INFRACTIONS OF THE HAGUE CONVENTION.

Germany signed the Hague Convention.

The first Governor-General, Baron von der Goltz, himself appealed to the Hague Convention in an order published by him on the 12th of November, 1914.

The second German Governor-General, Baron von Bissing, in a solemn proclamation, published on the 18th of July, 1915, declared that he *wished to administer Belgium according to the Hague Convention concerning the laws and customs of war on land*. . . . He added : His Majesty the German Emperor, after the occupation of the Kingdom of Belgium by our victorious troops, has entrusted to me the administration of the country and *has charged me to observe the obligations resulting from the Hague Convention*.

That is the law.

This is the fact.

1. *Collective Penalties*.

Article 50 of the Convention stipulates : " No collective penalty, pecuniary or otherwise, can be inflicted on the populations on account of the acts of individuals, for which they cannot be considered collectively responsible."

Now the history of the occupation comprises three periods : that of the invasion, and those over which Baron von der Goltz and Baron von Bissing successively presided.

During the period of the invasion the collective penalty was applied systematically and under all its forms. Proofs of this assertion abound. Here is one which by itself is sufficient :—

As fast as the invasion gained territory the Commander-in-Chief of the army had posted, in three languages, on red paper, a proclamation which said :—

"The villages where acts of hostility shall be committed by the inhabitants against our troops will be burnt.

"*The villages in proximity to the spot will be held responsible for all destruction of roads, railways, bridges, etc.*

"The punishments decreed above will be executed with severity and without mercy. *The whole district will be held responsible.* Hostages will be taken in large numbers. The heaviest contributions of war will be exacted."

Under the Government of Marshal von der Goltz a proclamation, signed by the hand of the Governor-General, and promulgated on the 2nd of September, 1914, in the occupied territory, said expressly : "It is the hard necessity of war that punishment for hostile acts strikes, *not only the guilty, but also the innocent.*"

Consequently collective punishments were applied without mercy.

Thus, as a typical instance, the town of Brussels was condemned to pay a fine of five millions because one of its policemen, unknown to the communal administration, had been wanting in respect to a functionary of the German civil administration.

A notice signed by Baron von der Goltz, placarded the 7th of October, 1914, applies the collective penalty to the family. It says : "The Belgian Government has forwarded to militiamen of several classes orders to rejoin the army. . . . It is strictly forbidden to all those who receive these orders to act upon them. . . . *In case of contravention the family of the militiamen will be held equally responsible.*

Under the Government of General Baron von Bissing, that is to say, starting from the 3rd of December, 1914, collective punishments, in violation of Article 50, have been continuous. Here are some specimens :

On the 23rd of December, 1914, a placarded notice said :—

"If the graves of fallen soldiers are damaged or violated, not only will the offender be punished, but also the *commune will be made responsible.*"

A notice of the Governor-General, dated the 26th of January, 1915, makes *the members of the family responsible* for any Belgian, fit for military service, of from 16 to 40 years of age, passing into Holland.

And, in fact, under the most futile pretences they impose huge fines on the communes ; the commune of Puers has to pay a fine of 3,000 marks because a telegraph wire was broken. And the inquiry nevertheless established that it had fallen through wear and tear.

Malines, a workmen's town, without resources, was mulcted in a fine of 20,000 marks, because the Burgomaster had not notified the military authorities of a journey that the Cardinal, deprived of the use of his motor-car, had been compelled to make on foot.

2. Forced Labour for the Enemy.

According to Article 52 of the Hague Convention, *requisitions in kind and of services* can only be demanded of communes or inhabitants on three conditions :—

1. On condition that they do not imply for the people the obligation of taking part in operations of war against their country ;

2. On condition that they only concern the requirements of the army of occupation.

3. On condition that they correspond with the resources of those of whom they are demanded.

It is interesting to note that Article 23 contains a final clause which was proposed at the 2nd Congress at the Hague in 1907 by the German delegates ; here it is : "It is forbidden for a belligerent to force the nationals of the adverse side to take part in operations of war directed against their country."

Yet :—

1. *During the invasion* Belgian civilians, in twenty places, were compelled to take part in operations of war against their country. At Termonde, at Lebbeke, at Dinant and elsewhere in many places, *peaceable citizens, women and children, were compelled to march at the head of German regiments, or to form a screen before them.*

At Liège and at Namur civilians were obliged to dig trenches and were employed on the work of rebuilding the fortifications.

The system of hostages was applied with frenzy. The proclamation of the 4th of August quoted above said without circumspection : "Hostages will be taken in large numbers."

An official proclamation posted at Liège in the early days of August stated : "Every aggression committed against the German troops by others than the military in uniform, not only exposes the offender to being immediately shot, *but will entail also the most violent reprisals against all the inhabitants, and especially against the citizens of Liège who are detained as hostages in the citadel of Liège by the commander of the German troops.*"

These hostages are : Mgr. Rutten, Bishop of Liège ;

M. Kleyer, Burgomaster of Liège ;

The senators, representatives, permanent deputy, and sheriff, of Liège.

2. *Under the Government of Field-Marshal von der Goltz* the requisitions of services practised during the month of August were continued under all their forms : digging of trenches, work on the fortifications, cartage, work on roads, bridges, railways, etc.

A notice of the Governor-General, appearing on the 19th of November, said : "Whoever shall have tried to hinder by constraint, by threat, by *persuasion* or by any other means, the execution of work for the German authorities, by persons willing to undertake this work or by contractors charged by the German authorities with the execution of this work, will be *punished* by imprisonment." The notice does not even state the duration of such imprisonment ; it is arbitrary, unlimited.

The system of hostages prevailed in all its severity.

A monstrous specimen of arbitrary cruelty is the proclamation placarded in the communes of Beyne-Heusay, Grivegnée and Bois-de-Breux by Major Commandant Dieckmann, on the 8th of September, 1914. Here is an extract from it:—

"Commencing from the 7th of September I shall permit persons of the above-named communes to re-enter their dwellings. In order to be certain that this permission is not abused the burgomasters of Beyne-Heusay and Grivegnée must immediately prepare lists of persons who will be held as hostages in the fort of Fléron.

"The life of these hostages depends upon the population of the before-mentioned communes remaining peaceful under all circumstances."

"I shall nominate the persons who, from midday of one day to midday of the next, have to remain as hostages. If the substitution has not taken place in due time the hostage remain a further twenty-four hours in the fort. After this fresh twenty-four hours the hostage incurs the penalty of death if the substitution is not made. As hostages, the priests and the burgomasters and the other members of the administration come first."

3. Under the Government of Baron von Bissing the violations of Article 52 were flagrant. The deeds done in the workshops of the railway at Luttre and at Malines, as also in some communes of West Flanders, are revolting. For instance:—

At the arsenal of Luttre the German authorities had posted, on the 23rd of March, 1915, a notice requiring the resumption of work. On the 21st of April they called for 200 workmen. On the 27th of April soldiers went to requisition the workmen at their homes and brought them to the arsenal. In case of absence of the workmen a member of the family was arrested.

However, the workmen maintained their refusal to work "because they did not wish to co-operate in acts of war against their country."

On the 30th of April the requisitioned workmen were no longer set at liberty, but shut up in railway carriages.

On the 4th of May 24 workmen detained at the prison of Nivelles were tried at Mons by a court martial "on the charge of belonging to a secret society having for its object to thwart the execution of German military measures." They were condemned to imprisonment.

On the 8th of May 48 workmen were shut up in a goods van and deported to Germany.

On the 14th of May 45 workmen were deported to Germany.

On the 18th of May a new proclamation announces that the prisoners "will only receive dry bread and water; hot food only every fourth day."

On the 22nd of May three trucks containing 104 workmen were sent to Charleroi.

In spite of all, the patriotic dignity of the workmen finally got the better of the pressure exercised upon them.

It was the same at Malines, where, by different means of intimidation, the German authorities tried to force the workmen of the arsenal to work on the material of the railway, as if it was not evident that this material would become sooner or later war-material.

On the 30th of May the Governor-General proclaims that he "will be obliged to punish the town of Malines and its suburbs by stopping all economic traffic if, on Wednesday, the 2nd of June, at 10 o'clock in the morning, 500 workmen of the arsenal do not come to work."

On Wednesday, the 2nd of June, no workmen appeared. Thereupon all circulation of vehicles within a radius of several kilometres round the town was stopped.

It was at this time that the journey on foot of the Cardinal of Malines to Eppegheem took place, a journey which cost the town of Malines a fine of 20,000 marks.

Some workmen were taken by force and kept at the arsenal for two or three days.

The suspension of traffic lasted ten days.

The commune of Sweveghem (Western Flanders) was punished in June, 1915, because the 350 workmen of the private factory of M. Bekaert refused to make barbed wire for the German army.

Here is a placard which was posted at Menin in July-August, 1915:—

"Order: Commencing from to-day the town may no longer give any assistance whatever, even to families, women and children, save to workmen working *regularly* at *military work* and other commanded work. All other workmen and their families cannot be assisted henceforth in any manner."

Is this sufficiently odious?

Similar measures were taken in October, 1914, at Harlebeke-lez-Courtrai, at Bisseghem, at Lokeren, and at Mons. At Harlebeke 29 inhabitants were deported to Germany. At Mons, in the works of M. Lenoir, the managers, foremen and 81 workmen were condemned to prison for refusing to work in the service of the German army: M. Lenoir to five years' imprisonment, five managers to one year, six foremen to six months, 81 workmen to eight weeks.

The General Government had also recourse to *indirect* means of constraint. It took possession of the Red Cross Society of Belgium, confiscated its property, and arbitrarily changed its objects. It endeavoured to make itself master of the public Charitable Institution and to exercise control over the National Committee of assistance and alimentation.

If we quoted in full the order of the Governor-General of the 14th of August, 1915, concerning the measures intended to secure the execution of works of public interest, and that of the 15th of August, 1915, concerning the unemployed who shirk work through idleness, it would be seen by what insidious methods the occupying Power attempts to strike at once at masters and workmen.

But it is in the zone of military dépôts that the disregard of the Hague Convention has been pushed to the extreme.

On the 12th of October, 1915, the Official Bulletin of Orders for the radius of dépôts published an order of which these are some salient passages:—

"ART. 1.—Whoever refuses without reason to undertake or continue a work in conformity with his profession and in the execution of which the *Military Administration is interested*, work ordered by one or more military commanders, will be liable to a penalty of correctional imprisonment for one year or more. He may also be deported to Germany.

"The fact of pleading Belgian laws or even international conventions to the contrary cannot, in any case, justify the refusal to work."

"On the subject of the lawfulness of the work required, *the Military Commandant has the sole right of decision.*

"ART. 2.—Whoever endeavours to persuade another person to the refusal indicated in Article 1, by constraint, threats, *persuasion* or other means, is liable to a maximum penalty of imprisonment for five years.

"ART. 3.—Whoever knowingly promotes the punishable refusal to work, *by assistance or other means*, will be liable to a fine not exceeding 10,000 marks; he may besides be condemned to one year's imprisonment.

"If communes or associations become guilty of such an offence, the heads will be punished for it.

"ART. 4.—Independently of the penalties imposed by Articles 1 and 3, the German authorities may, in case of necessity, impose a contribution or other coercive police measures on communes where the execution of a work has been refused without reason."

The present order comes into force forthwith.

Ghent, October 12th, 1915.

Der Etappeinspekteur,
VON UNGER, *Lieutenant-General.*

The injustice and arbitrariness of this order passes all imagination. Forced labour, collective penalties, and undetermined punishments: all is there. It is slavery, neither more nor less.

3. *New Taxes.*

Let us limit ourselves to mentioning, in a few words, two taxes contrary to Articles 48, 49, 51 and 52 of the Hague Convention.

The first was enacted by an order of Governor-General Baron von Bissing, dated the 16th of January, 1915. It consists of laying on absentees an additional extraordinary tax fixed at ten-fold the amount of the personal contribution. This tax is not comprised in any of the categories of existing taxes; it involves only one class of citizens who legitimately exercised their right to remove before the occupation of the country. It is therefore contrary to Articles 48 and 51 of the Convention.

The second violation of the Convention is the famous contribution of 480 millions imposed on the nine provinces on the 10th of December, 1914.

The essential condition of the legality of a contribution of this kind is, according to the Hague Convention, that it is *in keeping with the resources of the Country* (Art. 52).

Now in December, 1914, Belgium was laid waste; war-contributions imposed on the towns and innumerable requisitions in kind had drained it; the majority of its factories were stopped, and even those which were still working were requisitioned, against all law, for raw materials.

On this impoverished Belgium, living on the charity of foreigners, they imposed a tax of nearly a half billion.

The order of the 10th of December, 1914, proclaimed: "A war contribution of 40 millions of francs paid monthly is imposed on the Belgian people *for the period of one year.*"

This "period of one year" has elapsed!

Yet at the hour when we are writing these lines the occupying Power claims to substitute the whole length of the war for the period of one year.

Poor little Belgium! What has it done to rich and powerful Germany, its neighbour, to be thus trampled on, tortured, calumniated, exploited and drained by it?

If we had to furnish a complete statement of the orders and the acts by which the occupying Power has, to our knowledge, put itself in opposition to the Hague Convention, we ought also to quote *the abuse of requisitions in kind*, contrary to Article 52; the *seizure* of funds belonging to private societies, the requisition of the rails of railways to a length of hundreds of kilometres; the seizure of arms, deposited, by order of the Belgian Government, in the Town Halls, an abuse contrary to Article 53; *the disregard of the laws in force in the country*, especially in the matter of penal law, contrary to Article 43.

But we cannot say everything or quote everything here.

If, however, the recipients of our correspondence desire proof of the charges which we have only indicated in this final paragraph, we shall be ready to furnish them. There is no allegation in our letter or in the four annexures of which we do not possess proof in our records.

(Signed) D. J., Cardinal MERCIER,
Archbishop of Malines.

XI.*

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN MONSIEUR HEYLEN, BISHOP OF NAMUR, AND MONSIEUR SCHULTE, BISHOP OF PADERBORN, concerning the assertions relating to Belgium in the Abbé Rosenberg's work: *Der deutsche Krieg und der Katholizismus* (*The German War and Catholicism*).†

As long ago as April 10th, 1915, Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur, had, as we know, protested against the Note of the Prussian Ministry of War of January 22nd, 1915 (see above p. 308 to 312). On October 31st of the same year, the Bishop of Namur replied to the allegations contained in the German "White Book" of May 10th, 1915 (see p. 322 to 346). Finally, on the publication of the work: *Der deutsche Krieg und der Katholizismus*—a work purporting to be a reply to French attacks, and largely

* The following documents, first published in the newspaper, *La Metropole*, of Antwerp, now appearing in London, are not included in copies of the first and second impressions of the present work (*Note by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry*).

† Berlin, Germania, 1915. The French translation of this work was published by C. A. van Langenhuisen, Amsterdam-Rotterdam, in 1915 (*Note by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry*).

based upon the "White Book," fifteen of the Appendices of which it reproduces partially or entirely—Mgr. Heylen wrote a letter to Mgr. Schulte, Bishop of Paderborn, to controvert the assertions made by the Abbé Rosenberg, the author of the work in question, with regard to matters relating to Belgium, and more especially, to the diocese of Namur.

The Belgian Government does not possess the text of this letter—dated December 1st, 1915—to which the Abbé Rosenberg replied in the form of a note appended to a letter written by the Bishop of Paderborn on March 13th, 1916. A letter addressed by Mgr. Heylen to the Bishop of Paderborn on May 10th, 1916, contains the Bishop of Namur's reply to the Abbé Rosenberg's note.

The text of the letters of March 13th and May 10th is reproduced below :—

I. LETTER OF MGR. SCHULTE, BISHOP OF PADERBORN, TO MGR. HEYLEN.

Paderborn,
13th March, 1916.

Your Lordship sent me from Mayence, at the beginning of this year, a letter dated December 1st, 1915, attacking the Abbé Rosenberg, Professor of Religion at the Royal College of this town.

On my advice, and in view of your grave reproaches, he has again set forth his attitude towards the alleged Belgian atrocities.

I beg you to examine this statement, which you will find herewith.

In the charity of Christ,

Your Lordship's very devoted,

CHARLES JOSEPH,
Bishop of Paderborn.

Supplement to the Bishop of Paderborn's Letter.

To Monseigneur Heylen, Bishop of Namur.

MY ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ALLEGED BELGIAN ATROCITIES.

I have already set forth my essential views on this subject in my work: *The German War and Catholicism*, and further, in my answer to the second French pamphlet, which was published in the February number (1916), of *Theology and Faith*.*

With regard to the accusations brought against me by the Bishop of Namur in his letter dated December 1st, 1915, I have further to add the following supplementary declarations.

His Lordship accuses me :—1. Of stating as facts incidents which are manifestly unauthentic ; 2. Of making assertions offensive to Catholic feeling. These reproaches are based on the following data :—

A.—Rosenberg asserts that the severities of the German troops in Belgium were called forth by the extensive *francs-tireurs* war waged against them.

His Lordship urges that neither the Belgian Government nor any Belgian functionary ever organised any corps of *francs-tireurs*, and that there are not even any isolated instances of civilians having fired upon the German troops. All the Belgian Bishops declare that the assertion as to the existence of the supposed *francs-tireurs* is a myth.

To this I reply that I never said anywhere that bands of Belgian *francs-tireurs* had been organised by the Belgian Government or by Belgian officials. This accusation, therefore, falls to the ground to start with. But when it is asserted that no isolated cases of civilians having fired upon German soldiers are known, I must call attention to the following points :—

1. The proclamation of the Belgian Government, dated August 5th, 1914,† warns the population against the forbidden form, and instructs it as to the permissible form, of the people's war. The district Commissaries added certain injunctions. Among those of the Commissary for the district of Brussels on August 5th and 6th, the following passages occur :—

"All the Belgians are rising," and "Arm the men as well as you can, and as you like, with visible weapons." (*La Guerre allemande*, etc. Langenhuisen, Amsterdam, p. 69, 70). The last words are addressed to the Reserves of the Civic Guard, the functions of which, according to this notice, are : "To keep watch and ward over national independence and territorial integrity, and at the same time to maintain law and order." It is obvious that such injunctions might easily be wrongly interpreted.

2. German doctors declare on oath that in the hospitals on the Belgian frontier they treated German soldiers who had been wounded with shot in Belgium (*Grasshoff, Belgiens Schuld*, p. 60, Reimer, Berlin).‡ It will hardly be maintained that Belgian soldiers fought with shot-guns.

3. There are thousands of sworn statements by German soldiers attesting attacks by *francs-tireurs* (see the extracts in the French edition of my work, p. 72). Must we allow that they are all inventions ?

4. After the fusillade at Dolhain, J. Defossés, acting Burgomaster, published an appeal, in which these words occur : "*The abominable acts which have been committed this night are unworthy of our population. They are revolting to all conscientious minds, for it is an act of treachery on the part of civilians to fire upon soldiers*" (*Grasshoff*, p. 54).

5. In the early days of the war, the Belgian press gave many details concerning the *francs-tireurs* war which was being waged in various localities. See : *Het Handelsblad* (Antwerp), No. 187, of August 6th, 1914 ; *De Nieuwe Gazet*, No. 5072, of August 8th, 1914 ; *Het Handelsblad*, No. 190 ; *La Presse* (Antwerp), No. 217 ; *Le Nouveau Précurseur* (Antwerp), No. 223 ; *Le Matin* (Antwerp), No. 225 ;

* *Theologie und Glaube, Zeitschrift für den katholischen Klerus*, Verlag von Schöningh, Paderborn (Note by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry).

† What is meant here is really the circular of the Belgian Minister of the Interior, of August 4th, 1914, reproduced on pp. 289-291, of the present volume. (Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry).

‡ The same publisher has brought out a French translation of this work, entitled : *La Belgique Conspirable. Une Réponse à M. le Professeur Waxweiler*. M. Waxweiler's book, *La Belgique neutre et loyale*, was published by Fayot & Co., of Lausanne, in 1915. (Note by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry).

Burgerwelzijn (Bruges), No. 95; *La Métropole* (Antwerp), No. 218, and others (Cf. *Der Franktireurkrieg in Belgien, Geständnisse der belgischen Presse*. Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Stuttgart and Berlin). Is it possible that all these communications were inventions?

B.—Rosenberg attacks the Belgian clergy. The two proofs he brings forward in support of his accusations are worthless.

In discussing the culpability of the Belgian clergy, I express myself in these words, printed in italics: "*For the moment it is not yet possible to formulate a final judgment on this head.*" (French edition, p. 65). This is still my opinion to-day.

The accusations against the Belgian clergy rest upon one-sided data. I do not know whether the two examples I have chosen from a large number of the kind will be found to be true in every particular in the event of a bi-lateral inquiry. But since those who entirely deny the culpability of the Belgian clergy also rely upon one-sided evidence, I was justified in meeting this by the depositions of other witnesses, while leaving the final judgment to a subsequent bi-lateral inquiry.

Moreover, I consider that it is over-bold to assert that in the first period of intense excitement produced by the war, the Belgian clergy took no part whatever in the *francs-tireurs* war.

Have not priests admitted within these last few weeks before the military courts that they endeavoured to help young Belgians to escape from the territory occupied by the conquerors, in order to join the Belgian army?

C.—Rosenberg exonerates the German army from all reprehensible acts. (The application of a morality of this kind has been the cause of endless suffering and ruin, says Mgr. Heylen).

The reasons I have alleged should prove that it would be absurd to attempt to deny that reprehensible acts are committed in war-time. This has nothing to do with morality. I expressly declare that such acts cannot be justified, but that we are the first to regret them. However, explicable misdeeds are also designated as "reprehensible and worthy of censure," and all defence of them is explicitly excluded (French edition of my work, p. 56, 57). In my case, appreciation of human action is based upon the morality of the Catholic Church. The Bishop of Namur and I are at one on this point; the only difference in our appreciation of the so-called Belgian atrocities lies herein; that His Lordship accepts the abominations attributed to the German troops as proven, whereas I hold that they are not clearly proven. There is this further difference, that His Lordship proclaims the complete innocence of the Belgian clergy, whereas I consider it certain that no conclusive judgment is at present possible.

Paderborn,

20th February, 1916.

Professor A. J. ROSENBERG.

II. REPLY OF THE BISHOP OF NAMUR TO MONSEIGNEUR SCHULTE.

To His Lordship, Dr. Schulte, Bishop of Paderborn.

Bishop's Palace, Namur,

10th May, 1916.

MY LORD,

I am duly grateful to your Lordship for having transmitted to the Abbé Rosenberg the vigorous protest which I felt it due to my conscience to address to him with regard to the slanderous imputations he has expressed or admitted in his book against my clergy and my flock. I also thank your Lordship for forwarding the reply of this ecclesiastic.

In connection with this reply, I have several objections to urge and several observations to make, which I will also confide to your Lordship's gracious care, if I am successful in transmitting them to you.

I.

The Abbé Rosenberg declares that nowhere in his book does he mention an organisation of *francs-tireurs*.

Now on p. 67 he speaks of "the savage campaign of the civil population against the troops, a campaign prepared some time in advance, and officially organised on the very day the Germans entered Belgium."

The Abbé Rosenberg therefore denies having written that which is explicitly recorded in his book. Since it appears that he no longer believes in an organised *francs-tireurs* war, it was incumbent on him to withdraw his statement unreservedly, and to admit that he had been mistaken; it is inexplicable that he should have felt no repugnance to the proceeding he actually adopted.

With regard to the isolated attacks by *francs-tireurs*, he continues to insist that they took place; and he reproduces some of the miserable "proofs" which have gone the round of the German press and German current literature from the first. These "proofs" are, as a fact, merely general assertions, which it will be sufficient to deny categorically.

1.—He refers to the proclamation by the Belgian Government on August 5th and to the instructions given by the district Commissary of Brussels on August 5th and 6th, instructions which he considers "might easily have been misinterpreted."

Even supposing that a few of the circulars issued may have been drawn up in obscure and ambiguous terms—which is certainly not true of the particular ones in question—we maintain that they could not have been, and were not, misinterpreted by the people. There are, thank God, plenty of placards and plenty of newspaper notices, repeating in laconic terms the order to refrain from all acts of hostility. To declare that the existence of the *francs-tireurs* was the result of the wrong construction placed upon the prudent, conscientious, and reiterated instructions of the Belgian Government, is, to say the least of it, an evidence of amazing simplicity and frivolity.

2.—German doctors declare on oath that in the hospitals on the Belgian frontier, they treated German soldiers suffering from gun-shot wounds inflicted in Belgium (Grasshoff, *Belgiens Schuld*, p. 60). These could only have been the work of civilians. These are Grasshoff's words: "Fusilier Karl Grandisch was wounded, from behind a hedge, with shot."

Why does this writer, and Abbé Rosenberg after him, refrain from following up the proof in this case? Why are they silent as to the spot where the incident took place, the name of the peasant who was surprised behind the hedge with his shot-gun in his hand, the trial and sentence which followed on his guilty act? These are details for which we have long been asking, but which we shall never obtain. But without these details we have the right to denounce these statements as falsehoods, and we do so denounce them.

But here, on the other hand, are facts which I offer to publish and to prove, as being of a nature to throw light on this question of wounds inflicted by shot-guns:—

Several persons of my diocese received wounds inflicted by German soldiers with shot-guns. And there is nothing surprising about this; the German soldiers everywhere took possession of our sporting guns, and often used them. Under these circumstances, it is quite natural that the Germans themselves should have been wounded by shot. It would have been miraculous if no soldier had ever been hit in the course of the numerous fusillades they directed against invisible enemies, who were, as a fact, their own men. Such an incident took place at Namur.

3.—There are thousands of sworn statements by German soldiers, attesting attacks by *francs-tireurs*. It cannot be supposed that they are all falsehoods.

In my reply to the "White Book," dated October 31st, 1915, I took the trouble to note, to examine and to refute one by one the numerous depositions relating to supposed attacks by *francs-tireurs* in my diocese.

Not a single one of these remains intact, for not a single one relates an authentic fact.

German writers would do well to accept this idea, disagreeable as it may be to them; all this edifice of invention falls to the ground, to the great confusion of its authors, who will not even attempt to rebuild it! Numerous though they are, the accusations formulated by the troops break down before the irrefutable proof established by us that there were no more any isolated attacks by *francs-tireurs* than there were organised attacks.

This will cause the work accomplished by the German army, as also the accusations now brought against us, to be judged with ever-increasing severity.

4.—The deputy Burgomaster of Dolhain is said to have acknowledged in a placard that civilians had fired upon the troops in this place.

The placard is authentic; but Abbé Rosenberg, following Grasshoff's lead, was over-hasty in drawing the conclusion that there had been firing by civilians, and that M. Defossés, the acting Burgomaster, had been obliged to admit the fact.

If the German ecclesiastic had gone to Dolhain, he would have learnt that the placard in question was posted, not by the Belgian, but by the German authorities. The circumstances under which it was composed reflect little credit on the German army, and the defenders of that army were very ill-advised in using it as a weapon against us. As a fact, the placard is merely on a par with one of those innumerable German assertions, in which there is not even a semblance of proof that civilians fired on the troops.

It is well known among the public at Dolhain that M. Defossés was made a prisoner on August 8th, in the afternoon, that he remained a prisoner during the fusillade carried out by the troops in the course of the following night, and during the fires which destroyed a considerable part of the place on Sunday, August 9th. It was during his imprisonment, under pressure of the most severe threats, that he drew up the notice by order of the Commandant, under his instructions, and almost at his dictation. He had not been a witness of any of the events, he had not taken part in any inquiry or examination; if he bowed to the harsh demand made to him, it was for the sake of the inhabitants, "to save"—as the placard says—"what remains of our dear Commune." All this is curiously emphasised by the style and tenour of the notice, which speaks of "burning Dolhain to the ground at the first breach of the regulations," and "shooting without trial any person found in possession of weapons and cartridges," etc. So little did the worthy magistrate admit the possibility of civilians having fired, that even when he was writing out the proclamation, he insisted that he knew all the persons under his jurisdiction, that he was certain none of them possessed weapons, and that such a peaceable population was incapable of the acts ascribed to it. He even ventured to repeat this protest on the Sunday evening in the presence of the General, although the latter threatened "to have him hanged" on a certain tree he pointed out.

As to the deed itself, must we allow that civilians actually fired, or even that they may be suspected of having done so?

No! emphatically No! If civilians had fired, a post-mortem examination of the soldiers and horses killed would have speedily proved the crime. If they had fired, it would have been easy to have caught at least some of the offenders in the act, to have pursued and arrested them; now no civilian was taken red-handed or accused by name. The only two inhabitants who were wounded during the fusillade and who died in consequence of their wounds, were neither suspected nor accused. As to other civilians who fell victims to German bullets, they fell, not on the day of the fusillade, nor as *francs-tireurs*, but on other occasions and under well-known circumstances. The German commanders declared that shots had been fired from the episcopal Institut de Saint-Joseph and from the communal College; but an inquiry held upon the spot proved the absurdity of the accusation.

It was the German soldiers, and they alone, who fired at Dolhain! It was they who killed or wounded their own comrades!

It is our personal conviction that what happened in this sorely-tried spot was one of the first instances, and one of the most typical applications of the system of *terrorisation*, that system accepted by the German code of war, deliberately applied everywhere, and in pursuance of which, in the twentieth century and in a civilised country, the German authorities have not shrunk from the destruction of villages, the massacre of civilians, the martyrisation of the population, and the violation of the most sacred principles of humanity.

5.—Finally, Belgian newspaper articles of the first days in August, tell of attacks by *francs-tireurs*. I have already demolished this argument by explaining the fact of these few notices in my reply to the "White Book."*

Nothing could give a better idea of the puerility of German arguments on this head, than a perusal *in extenso* of the publications on the subject.†

If there had been a *francs-tireurs* war in Belgium, it is incredible that it should have left such scanty and insignificant traces in the press; this is the very definite impression left on the mind by such reading.

This, indeed, was noted and understood by our accusers themselves. One of them has recourse to one of these *a priori* explanations in which they excel. "In connection with the *francs-tireurs* also, the Belgian press, acting, no doubt, upon a recommendation from the authorities, very soon adopted the adage: "Speech is silver, silence is golden."‡

Others are less scrupulous. This is how the attitude of the Belgian press is described by the imaginative pen of Dr. Joseph Sauer, one of the contributors to the great work of the German Catholics.§

"For weeks," writes the Professor of the University of Freiburg, "the Belgian newspapers were full of stories of the heroic acts performed by civilians not in military costume, by women and even by young girls, and this without a word of disavowal from any quarter, even from that of the clergy. These newspapers went so far as to represent, in words and pictures, and in great detail, the most bestial atrocities, glorifying and applauding them, until the day when, as was only natural, the catastrophes of Aerschot, Dinant, and Louvain were brought about."

Against such an unscrupulous perversion of the truth every sincere and honest man will protest most vehemently. It is difficult to find terms in which to stigmatise the methods of such a writer adequately.

What is the fact with regard to the very rare cases of supposed attacks by civilians recorded in the Belgian newspapers? When we examine them one by one, we recognise that these stories are utterly without foundation. "Who," says the Bishop of Liège, in his letter of November 1st, "has not read the account of the famous battle of Herstal, in which women were said to have thrown boiling oil upon the Germans? Now this battle is a pure invention; it never took place."||

I therefore maintain unreservedly all I affirmed in my first letter as to the attitude of Belgian civilians to the German troops.

In my diocese there were no attacks, great or small. There was nothing to provoke the terrible acts which spread horror throughout my diocese, acts which were, and must always be looked upon, as purely gratuitous cruelties.¶

II.

In respect of the culpability of the clergy, Rosenberg declares that he expressed himself in his book in these terms: "For the moment it is not yet possible to formulate a final judgment on this head."**

This quotation suggests that the author was very moderate in his book, and that the reproaches I addressed to him were groundless.

But has the Abbé Rosenberg kept to the truth in summarising the assertions in his book as he has done? By no means. For he also wrote the following passage: "It is, moreover, open to us to-day to recognise the falsity of the assertion that no ecclesiastic took part in the *francs-tireurs* war. Statements made by witnesses under oath, military reports, and court-martial inquiries place this participation beyond the possibility of doubt. Further, Belgians themselves have admitted that priests had instigated the attacks against the German troops, and had themselves fired upon the latter. Arms and ammunition were found on several occasions in priests' houses.††

And in support of these assertions our accuser reproduces the statements which affirm the guilt of the clergy of Andenne, and the curate of Etalle.

We ask any honest man: Could the Abbé Rosenberg be more explicit on the question? We ask ourselves in astonishment how he would express himself "to formulate a final judgment."

The Abbé Rosenberg adds that he is still of the same opinion.

It is, as we shall see, the same singular opinion, nothing definite, nothing frank and straightforward the author evades the point, he indulges in subterfuges, he faces both ways at once.

Here first we have the Abbé Rosenberg undecided, holding his final judgment as to the culpability of the Belgian priests in reserve: "Since those who entirely deny the culpability of the Belgian clergy rely upon one-sided evidence, I was justified in meeting this by the depositions of other witnesses, while leaving the final judgment to a subsequent bi-lateral inquiry."

As to this inquiry, does not the author know that we too desire it as the sole means of bringing to light what we know to be the truth?

* See p. 327 of the present volume. (*Note by the Belgian Commission of Inquiry*).

† Cf. more especially: *Der Franktireurkrieg in Belgien*, Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Berlin. Dr. ROHRBACH, *Massenverhetzung und Volkskrieg in Belgien*, Curtius, Berlin. The second work borrows the principal newspaper extracts on the subject from the first named.

‡ Dr. ROHRBACH, *Massenverhetzung*, &c., p. 87.

§ Dr. PFEILSCHIFTER, *Deutsche Kultur, Katholizismus und Weltkrieg*, Herder, Freiburg, p. 208.

|| See p. 9 of Note 118 of the Bureau documentaire belge, established at 52, Rue des Gobelins, Le Havre. (*Note of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry*).

¶ Some fresh publications have appeared in Germany bearing upon my diocese, in which the lack of all critical judgment and a thorough contempt for historical truth are more and more evident. These writers never dream of testing the statements by soldiers reproduced in the "White Book" or elsewhere; not only do they repeat them with blind credulity, but they develop them in the most fanciful manner. This is the case in several new versions of events at Dinant, of which it is no exaggeration to say that they are insolent outrages upon truth. (See Bodo EBHARDT, *Krieg und Baukunst*, Burgverlag, Berlin, p. 97; H. BINDEN, *Mit dem Hauptquartier nach Westen*, Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, Berlin, p. 114; Sauer, *Kunst und heilige Stätten im Kriege*, in PFEILSCHIFTER's *Deutsche Kultur, Katholizismus und Weltkrieg*, p. 189).

The last-named writer, speaking of the destruction of churches, complacently sets forth the principles observed by a disciplined army which respects international law. These, he asserts, are the principles of the German army. Now we maintain that these were, on the contrary, the principles that army outraged in its passage through Belgium.

This fact lightens our task considerably. We need but establish the facts, and they will be condemned by the book of the German Catholics themselves.

** Page 65.

†† Page 66.

Does he not know that on ten different occasions we have demanded it as the right which in strict justice, belongs to an accused person ?*

Does he not know that the German authorities have always turned a deaf ear to our legitimate requests ?

Does he not know that, in order to obtain this inquiry, we at last in despair, informed the German Episcopate of our requests by a collective letter, not with any idea of inducing it to commit an anti-patriotic action of any sort, but to obtain its support for our most justifiable demand ?

Does he not know that on the occasion of this collective action, the occupying authority made known to us its final refusal to grant a bi-lateral inquiry, even accusing us of having, by our action, " tried to make the German Bishops accessory to a doubt as to the accuracy of the official German depositions recorded in the " White Book ? " "

Such then is to be our fate ! The victim is not to be allowed to give evidence in the great trial which the Abbé Rosenberg himself demands, and which is to establish the guilt either of Germany or of Belgium before the world. According to the German authorities, the history of events in Belgium has already been written : the " White Book "—that work which in my Note of October 31st, 1915, I stigmatised in words severe perhaps, but by no means adequate in their severity—has sanctioned it definitively.

The Abbé Rosenberg therefore suspends judgment until he knows the result of a bi-lateral inquiry which will never be held.

If, taking advantage of this lack of finality decreed by her, Germany continues to accuse us, her conduct is flagrantly unjust. But even should her accusations persist, what man will hesitate for a moment between the testimony of him who desired the fullest light on the matter, and offered to procure it, and him who, fearing that light, refused to let it shine ?

Further on, we find the Abbé Rosenberg abandoning his indecision, and formulating fresh accusations against us : " It is over-bold to assert," he writes, " that . . . the Belgian clergy took no part whatever in the *francs-tireurs* war."

Thus, disdaining the solemn affirmations of a Bishop who has declared the innocence of all his clergy and has offered to prove it, this ecclesiastic remains incredulous. He persists in maintaining doubts as to the innocence of thousands of his brethren, without, however, attempting to prove the culpability of a single one of them, or in any way impugning the evidence I have offered of the innocence of those he accuses. No, I am wrong. He is now in possession of a proof that our priests fired on the German troops.

" During the last few weeks," he writes, " have not certain of the clergy confessed before the military tribunals that they endeavoured to help young Belgians to escape from the territory occupied by the conquerors in order to join the Belgian army ? "

The Abbé Rosenberg dares to assimilate these two actions and place them in the same category. He makes no distinction between firing upon the troops and helping young men to go to the front ! Setting aside the fact that from the point of view of theological malice, these two acts are not comparable, he argues that the first may be inferred from the establishment of the second. He declares that to his mind he who is capable of the lesser offence is capable of the greater ! What are we to think of such logic ?

Moreover, does the Abbé Rosenberg really think that the right of the German authorities to forbid certain acts which contravene their military ends suffice to render these acts intrinsically evil ? These acts would be glorified and extolled by German citizens themselves, if some day they should know the truth as to our present misfortunes ! Our very enemies, if they have any nobility of mind, should reverence these acts, inspired by patriotic virtue ! Instead of making them a grievance and a reproach to us, they ought to deplore the unjust and cruel violence they have inflicted on the sacred and legitimate sentiments of a free people ; they should bitterly regret the results of their violation of our neutrality, which now necessitates a series of actions that history will judge severely.

Such considerations enable us to appreciate the Abbé Rosenberg's logic, when, in a manifestation of patriotic sentiment, he sees a proof that our priests fired on the troops.

What will the attitude of our accuser be henceforth with regard to the matter in question ?

Will he have the honesty to modify his book in accordance with his latest declarations, to repair the wrong he has done to truth and to religion by his irresponsible propagation of such serious charges ?

If he has no faith in our categorical assertions as to the innocence of our priests, our formal denials as to the supposed exploits of the *francs-tireurs*, will he at least mention our indignant protest against the judgments he has formulated and the reports he has published on these two heads ?

Will he henceforth hesitate to launch fresh accusations against our innocent flock, without consulting us ?

Will he renounce the extravagant chauvinism which has caused him to accept without preliminary inquiry the most unfounded assertions, assertions which are an outrage upon Catholic feeling ?

Will he help us to obtain that bi-lateral inquiry which he himself admits to be necessary for the establishment of the truth ?

Will he, pending this inquiry, refrain from citing as proved and established, incidents which, as he himself acknowledges, rest only on one-sided evidence ?

I hope to obtain from this ecclesiastic the legitimate satisfaction which will enable me to modify my present attitude towards him.

I beg your Lordship to accept the homage of the religious veneration with which I subscribe myself,

Your very humble servant in Christ,

(Signed) THOMAS LOUIS HEYLEN,

Bishop of Namur.

* His Eminence Cardinal Mercier asked the Governor-General to grant it in his letters of January 24th, 1915, and February 10th, 1915, as well as in the verbal message transmitted by Monseigneur van Roey, Vicar-General, on February 8th, 1915. His Lordship, the Bishop of Liège asked for it in his letter of November 1st, 1915, to the Governor-General (Answer to the " White Book "). The Bishop of Namur asked for it in his note of April 10th, 1915, to the Governor-General (Reply to the telegram of the Prussian Minister for War to the Chancellor) ; in his letter of May 9th, 1915, to the Governor of Namur ; and finally, in his note of October 31, 1915, to the Governor-General (Reply to the White Book.)

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